

The National Future Farmer

Published by the Future Farmers of America

June-July, 1984



**Inside this Issue: New National FFA Advisor
Careers in Floriculture**



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A Word With The Editor

The Future Farmers of America entered a new era on May 29 when Dr. Larry Case assumed the duties of National FFA Advisor. Dr. Case becomes national advisor as part of his responsibilities as Senior Education Program Specialist for Agriculture, Agribusiness and Natural Resources Occupations in the U.S. Department of Education.

Dr. Case brings with him the support of his peers in agricultural education, as he was highly recommended by the profession. He will also take over the top adult position in FFA at a critical time in the organization's history. The back to basics movement in education, the role of vocational agriculture in the present farming situation, the decline in high school enrollment in general—all impact on FFA membership and the organization's opportunity to serve agricultural youth.

The need for responsible leadership has never been greater, but Dr. Case comes to his new position well prepared for the challenge. A Missouri native and reared on a farm, he was a chapter president, vocational agriculture teacher, vocational school director and state director of agricultural education—to name a few of his accomplishments.

With new leadership and full support of agricultural educators, FFA members and leaders in the industry of agriculture, this new era could mean some of FFA's greatest years lie ahead.

Just a brief note on this issue: inside you'll find several articles which prove how determined FFA members can be when it comes to meeting the challenge of establishing careers in agriculture. Our cover story on Melissa Sherman, page 28, and the Star Agribusinessmen, page 22, are good examples. Enjoy!

Wilson Carnes

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Cover Description:

FFA'er Melissa Sherman, 18, is always glad to help customers at her family's nursery in Fallbrook, California. Melissa earned the national FFA proficiency award in nursery operations last year. Her story begins on page 28.

Cover Photo by Michael Wilson

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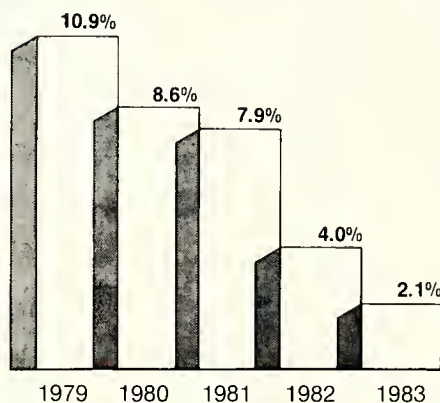
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Trends in Agriculture Looking Ahead

FOOD PRICES went up again last year, but it was the lowest increase in 16 years. According to USDA figures, food prices, under pressure of large supplies and recession-weakened consumer demand, rose only 2.1 percent last year, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). That's about half the 4 percent rise in 1982 (see chart).



CPI, annual averages

Above, rise in food prices continues downward trend.

A NEW TWO-WAY state-wide television system installed in 12 Indiana county extension service offices is making it easier for Indiana farmers to keep up with changing government regulations, economics, technology and weather forecasts. Now, instead of a few dozen people gathered in county extension offices for a lecture, hundreds of people across the state can receive information as soon as it is available, via television. Students pay a fee (ranging between \$10-\$25) and are able to ask questions of instructors during the lectures, which are broadcast live, with telephone hook-ups at each receiving site.

BUYING A COMPUTER? Before you or your parents make the purchase, ask yourselves what problems you want the computer to help you solve, says a specialist at the

University of Minnesota. Survey results show accounting is the most common computer application for people running farms; second most popular function is control of ongoing operations. Other frequent applications include farm financial planning and word processing.

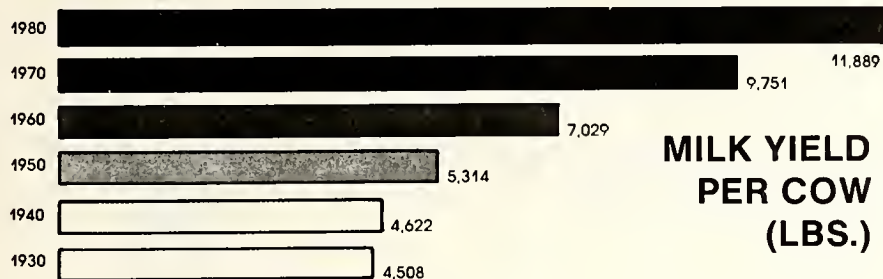
AQUACULTURE, the cultivation and harvest of aquatic plants and animals, is growing fast, according to a recent issue of *Farmland News*. Global production, estimated at more than 21 billion pounds, increased significantly over the past 15 years. Total U.S. production is almost 400 million pounds—about 11 percent of the fish and shellfish we eat in the United States.

USDA'S MONUMENTAL PIK (Payment-In-Kind) Program had long-term benefits to agriculture as well. Farmers who took part in the 1983 PIK programs reduced soil erosion by more than 20 percent on cropland taken out of production, according to Secretary of Agriculture John Block. A report on conservation benefits of PIK estimates a total savings of 121 million tons of soil that would have eroded had the acreage been in production.

MACHINERY NOW RANKS SECOND only to land in the annual cost structure of the average farm, according to ag researchers at North Carolina State University. That means machinery management is a very important part of the total management of a farm operation. To avoid costly breakdowns and increase machinery dependability, the ag researchers offer these guidelines: • Practice preventive maintenance and regularly look over machines during use. • Drive field machines cautiously on rough fields. • Don't overload equipment or power units. • Check all strange sounds, vibrations or smells. Don't wait for small repair jobs to balloon into major overhaul jobs. • Keep all power-transmitting members of the machine adjusted, aligned and lubricated.

FARMERS ARE PLANTING MORE CROPS this year than last year. According to a USDA survey found in *USA Today*, the following rounded figures give an idea of the dramatic change:

Crop	1984 Acreage	% change from 1983
Wheat	82.6 million	+ 7.4
Corn	81.8 million	+36.0
Soybeans	65.2 million	+ 2.7
Sorghum	14.8 million	+25.4
Cotton	10.8 million	+35.6



**MILK YIELD
PER COW
(LBS.)**

AMAZING MILKING MACHINES:

According to USDA, today's average milk cow gives about 12,500 pounds of milk per year, three times as much as in 1925 and more than twice as much as in 1950. During 1983, America's 11.1 million cows—only about 60 percent of

the number 25 years ago—set an all-time milk production record. Experts say we'll see additional gains in cow productivity as U.S. herds continue to improve genetically, farmers increase concentrate feeding and further improve management (see chart).

FARM EXPORT EARNINGS may climb to around \$39 billion in 1984, about \$4 billion higher than in 1983 but still below the record \$43.8 billion set in 1981. But according to USDA sources, those farm export gains will not result from more sales; higher commodity prices are the cause. The dollar value of U.S. farm exports declined both in 1982 and 1983 after rising steadily for 12 straight years. This year, prices for corn and soybeans—which will account for almost two-thirds of this year's farm export earnings—are up sharply from last year.

FINANCIAL REPORTS SHOW increasing stress in the farm credit system. According to the Farm Credit Administration, problems of

borrowers are reflected in the nation's farmer-owned Federal Land Banks and Production Credit Associations. PCA loan losses increased from \$159 million in 1982 to \$238 million in 1983; while losses among Federal Land Banks rose from \$1.8 million to \$9.8 million.

HOW MUCH FOR FOOD?

American families spend a smaller proportion of their personal disposable income on food than people of any other nation. The share of income used for food purchases has fallen from 27 percent in 1940 to 16 percent today. Russians spend about 34 percent of their disposable income on food, and the people of India spend over half—about 56 percent—of their disposable income for food.

Safety Corner

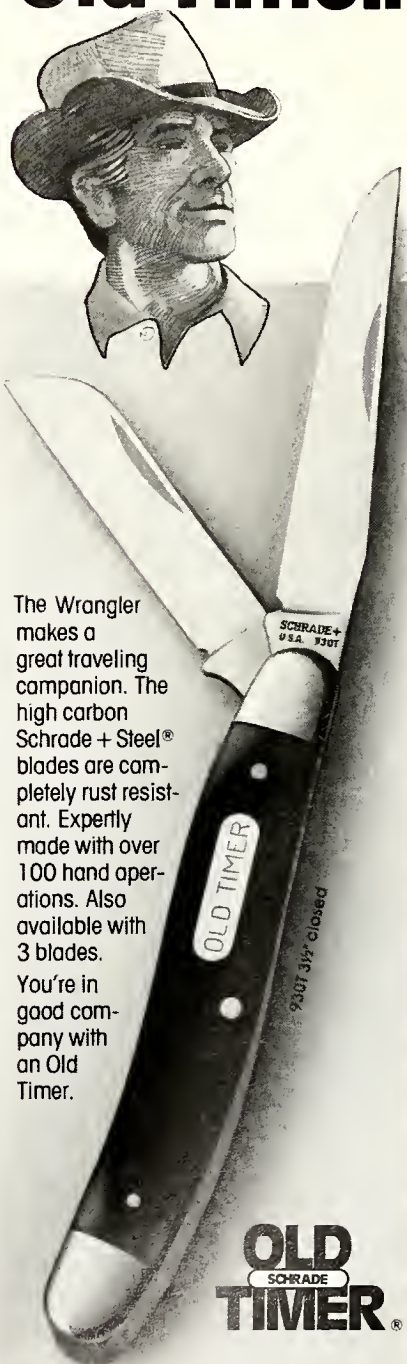
KEEP GUARDS fastened to your farm machinery and you may be guarding your life, say specialists at Texas A&M Extension Service. Guards and shields are installed on farm machinery and other equipment by the manufacturer to protect you. Best advice is to follow these tips:

- Inspect your machinery before you will need it to spot missing or damaged guards. Replace or repair them.
- Check telescoping shields each work day to make sure they rotate freely.
- Stay clear of unguarded moving parts. Stop the machine before unclogging or working on it.
- Replace guards over drive belts and chains when adjustments are complete. Test machinery only with guards on.

A REPORT from the University of Missouri says that grain drowning is one of the most common causes of death in and around grain bins. A new guide sheet identifies hazards present during the harvest and storage season and suggests preventive measures. Single copies of Guide 1969, "Safe Storage and Handling of Grain," are free at your local extension center.

A UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA study shows that, per million hours of use, gain augers cause the highest number of accidents on the farm. Keeping guards and covers intact, power line clearance when moving the auger, watching for winch failure when positioning the equipment and wearing snug-fitting clothing will help prevent accidents.

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FFA Welcomes New National Advisor

He is Larry Case, former FFA member, vo-ag teacher,
and state FFA advisor from Missouri.

LARRY Case, director of agricultural education and state FFA advisor from Missouri, has been named Education Program Specialist for Agriculture, Agribusiness and Natural Resources Occupations in the U.S. Department of Education. He will be responsible for providing leadership to vocational agriculture students and professionals across the nation.

In conjunction with his new position, Dr. Case has also been named National Advisor of the Future Farmers of America. Dr. Case replaces Byron Rawls, who retired August 31, 1983.

Case, 40, was born in Norborne, Missouri, and was raised on a farm in Stet, Missouri, where he was a chapter president of the Future Farmers of America. He is the third national advisor to have also been an FFA member.

He graduated from Stet High School in 1961. He received a bachelor of science degree in agricultural education in 1966 and a master's degree in vocational education in 1972 from the University of Missouri at Columbia, where he finished his doctorate work in education in 1983.

Dr. Case served as a vocational agriculture instructor for 8½ years and as a director of Vocational Education for three years before 1977 when he was named a state supervisor of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. He was promoted to state FFA advisor and director of ag education in July of 1978.

"My overall goal is to maintain and increase the quality of vocational education," says Dr. Case.

"My philosophy has always been that if a man's work is worthy of recognition,

CASE: "There was never any question in my mind since I was a youngster, that my life would be dedicated to agriculture."

then people will recognize it," he says. "I look at this position as one of great responsibility in trying to lead the profession of vocational agriculture. And I look at it with great excitement."

Dr. Case says his early childhood days on a midwestern farm influenced his decision to become involved in agriculture in one way or another. "There was never a question in my mind since I was a youngster, that my life would be



Above, Larry Case, former state FFA advisor from Missouri, says: "My overall goal is to maintain and increase the quality of vocational education."

dedicated to some type of service in agriculture," he says. "I view vocational agriculture as fulfilling one of society's needs—providing qualified people to meet the challenges of producing food and fiber in this nation."

Another factor that influenced him has been his love for people. "Educators are in the people business," he says. "If you enjoy agriculture and love it, and if

you enjoy teaching and people, then I can't think of a better position to be in.

"I'm looking forward to working with folks across the nation," he adds. "I hope people will see that I'm really interested in each one of them as an individual."

Dr. Case and his wife Joy have three children: Jeffrey, 14, Rebecca, 10, and Matthew, 2. ●●●

The National FUTURE FARMER

The Mailbag

Woodside, New York

My name is Monica Escamilla. I'm 16 years of age and a student at John Bowne High School in Flushing, New York. I am a member of the FFA and I was wondering why the magazine has never considered coming to New York and visiting John Bowne High School. I don't think we know as much as someone from the country but we are willing to learn.

Monica Escamilla

The National FUTURE FARMER featured the John Bowne vocational agriculture program in the April-May, 1980, issue. The article was called "The Future Farmers of New York City."

We agree that more coverage should be given to FFA chapters in urban high schools. That's why we're currently planning a feature story on urban FFA chapters for a fall 1984 issue. —Ed.

Moline, Illinois

In your story on the farm machinery industry in your April-May edition, you wrote that "Even mighty John Deere and Co., the largest farm machinery firm in the country, lost an estimated \$1.8 billion in 1982." The fact is that in 1982 we earned \$53 million. In 1983 we earned \$23 million. We have not had a loss in any year in modern history. A figure such as \$1.8 billion just has no relationship to anything in the report.

Rey W. Brune
Deere & Company

The National FUTURE FARMER regrets the error. —Ed.

Chesnee, South Carolina

I have been a member of the FFA for three years. I have also read *The National FUTURE FARMER* for these three years. I have not noticed in any issue an article or advertisement centered around fruit farmers.

In the Southeast, peaches are a major crop, apples in the Northwest and cherries in the Great Lakes region. There are a great many of your readers who are fruit farmers that would be interested in the same type of articles you publish centered around fruits or vegetables. Also there are advertisers who provide a service or product to fruit and vegetable farmers which you could tap into. This is an area that you might research.

Brian F. Smith

The National FUTURE FARMER featured a fruit farmer, Brian Bachman, in our February-March 1984 issue. —Ed.

Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin

I am looking forward to joining FFA in high school even though I am 15 years old and in the eighth grade. I work on a farm every day feeding cows and doing field work.

I read through the Official FFA

Manual and learned a lot about FFA. I like the FFA emblem and the sayings of each object in the emblem. FFA has a lot to choose from in all the listings I saw that you could take in the chapter.

I do experiments with the soil—I raise a garden, take care of two pine trees and have an experimental garden growing alfalfa, field corn and other crops.

Chris Falkavage

Kano, Kano State Nigeria

I am a product of California State

University, Fresno, with a B.S. degree in agricultural business. I am now back in my country Nigeria and working in an agricultural department. I feel by subscribing to your magazine it will help me with my work.

George Sualla

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to: MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

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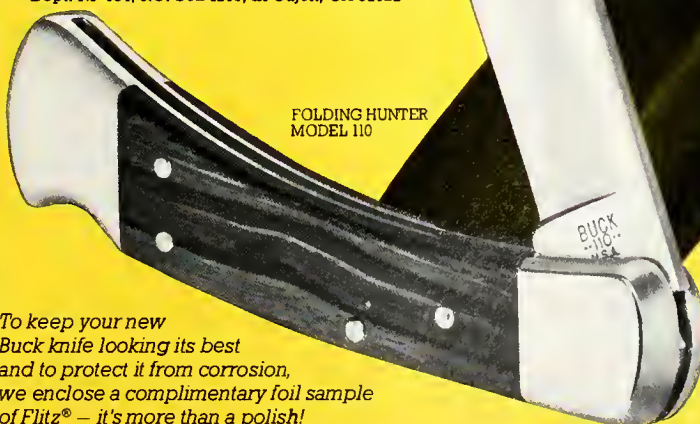
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The FFA News in Brief

COLLEGIATE FFA CHAPTERS

may soon organize a national council to provide overall leadership to individual chapters around the country. That was just one recommendation offered during a meeting of Collegiate FFA Chapter presidents, who gathered earlier this year in Stillwater, Oklahoma to plan and discuss issues affecting their membership. A final report of the meeting will be issued soon.

FFA DEVELOPMENT Projects got a boost this spring when 2,000 pounds of vegetable seeds, donated to the National FFA Foundation by Asgrow Seed Company, were shipped to members of FFA's counterpart organizations in Panama and Colombia. In turn, these young people will plant vegetable demonstration plots and benefit from the resulting crop.



Above, Maryland state officers Joe Hagerty and Todd Levering assist in the labeling and shipping of vegetable seeds sent to Panama and Colombia.

FOR THE RECORD: FFA was recognized in congress during FFA Week, 1984, by Rep. William H. Natcher, D-Ky. Congressman Natcher, whose remarks were recorded in the *Congressional Record*, said in part: "I know of no group of young people who are accomplishing more in the field of agriculture for their home communities, state and nation than members of the Future Farmers of America. I want to take this opportunity to commend the members of Future Farmers of America for their accomplishments during the past year and to wish them continued success in the future."

THE NATIONAL FFA

FOUNDATION reports more agribusinesses have opted to support vocational agriculture and FFA. Here are some of the more recent supporters: Garst Seed Company; Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company; Terra Chemicals International, Inc.; Dunavant Enterprises, Inc.; Federal Land Bank, Federal Intermediate Credit Bank and Banks for Cooperatives; First Mississippi Corporation Foundation; United States Sugar Corporation; *Successful Farming*; Federal Crop Insurance Corporation; and the Wells Fargo Bank in San Francisco, California.

ON THE GROW: The National FFA Alumni Association increased its membership 6 percent last year, jumping from 23,763 members in 1982 to 25,220 members in 1983. States which showed largest growth were Georgia, up 156 percent, and North Carolina, which increased membership by 97 percent.

THE FFA SAFETY Program has been awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Department of Transportation, according to Ted Amick, FFA program specialist. The grant will be used by FFA to conduct research and develop materials for vo-ag teachers to use in their classes. Special emphasis will be to encourage the use of seat belts and to discourage the use of alcohol while driving.

New FFA Chapter Resource System

EVERYTHING YOU'VE always wanted to know about FFA: now you can find it in the *FFA Chapter Resource System*, a new method of finding information developed by the National FFA Organization. "We saw a need for a better system of organization since there have been so many new FFA materials developed over the past few years," says Cameron Dubes, director of information. "The system includes basic elements needed by every successful FFA chapter." These include the official FFA Manual, Official FFA Catalog, The FFA Alumni, *The National FUTURE FARMER* and *BETWEEN ISSUES*, and the Student Handbook and Advisor's Guide. A file kit which explains the system is available through the new 1984-85 Official FFA Catalog, mailed to your FFA chapter in August. Watch for it.



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Send an Ag Teacher to Computer Camp

It's back to school for some vo-ag teachers—they're learning how to use microcomputers in ag classrooms.

LAST summer four major agribusiness corporations and a computer software company teamed together to put on five training sessions for ag teachers in Iowa. The goal of the workshops was to help teach ag teachers how to use micro-computers in vo-ag and Young Farmer classes.

"The subject was computers, but the camp dealt mostly with teaching ideas," says Irv Meier, an ag teacher/workshop participant from the Dysart-Geneseo FFA Chapter, Dysart, Iowa. "The programs were designed specifically for ag teachers, not farmers."

Keith Carlson, of Agri-Education, Inc., is a former vo-ag teacher turned computer programmer. He helped design the special vo-ag software and teach the workshops.

"There was a concern that teachers were needing educational materials but were using programs meant for farmers," says Mr. Carlson. "We had to start from scratch developing these materials, because there are very few educational computer programs for vocational agriculture."

"To my knowledge, there has never been anything like this camp," he adds.

About 90 teachers, one third of all Iowa vo-ag instructors, attended the workshops. Vo-ag students accompanied teachers at two of the sessions.

Each teacher brought a computer to

the workshops, which were held at junior colleges and high schools. After each session, the camp sponsors—A.O. Smith Harvestore, John Deere, Pioneer Hybrid, Ciba Geigy and Farm Business Systems—donated almost \$1,000 worth of computer software to each vocational agriculture department involved. Com-

"I think these ag companies that prepare software for teachers welcome their use in high schools."

puter programs dealt with farm machinery management, farm accounting, conservation tillage, high moisture grain and manure management.

According to a Harvestore spokesman, the companies feel the workshops are a good investment in the future, plus a unique opportunity to promote their own software and products.

"I think these ag companies that prepare software for teachers welcome their use in high schools," says Mr. Meier. "But we have to have cooperation from both teachers and ag businesses for it to work."

Indeed, by every indication, the new idea is working—and plans for expansion have been readied for another round of

workshops. The Harvestore spokesman said the companies plan to hold computer workshops for ag teachers and Young Farmer programs in 15 more states this summer. ...

Computer Survey Says Software, Training Needed

ACCORDING to a survey, high school vocational agriculture departments using micro-computers (or planning to use them) need better software and better training for vo-ag instructors.

"Microcomputers are being increasingly used in public schools and vocational agriculture classes," says Texas Tech agricultural education professor M.J. Cepica, author of the survey. "But until now there has been no plan to assist the vo-ag teachers."

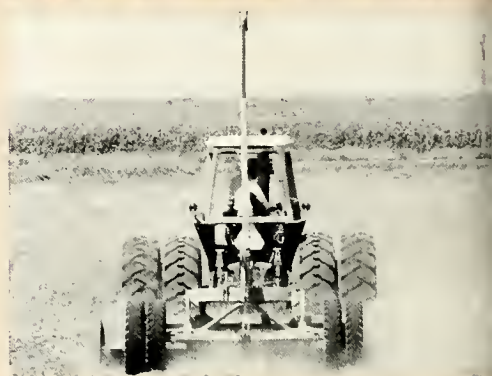
The survey was sent to the 922 high school vocational agriculture programs in Texas. About half responded. From 446 schools, the professor received 2,269 requests for software in 183 areas, indicating a great need for appropriate software in vocational agriculture classrooms.

"We're taking the most requested areas and developing programs for them," he says. The most requested software program was for the production agriculture record book used across the state. The book, used with an SOE (supervised occupational experience) program, helps vo-ag students keep livestock and crop records.

The research also indicated that vo-ag teachers are interested in integrating computer instruction into their programs, but need more training.



Above, Rob Roberts, left, and a hired machine operator discuss the next leveling job. Above right, note the small light-monitor which alerts an operator to make leveling adjustments. Right the mobile receiver takes signals from the "base" laser.



Lasers Get The Job Done

A thin beam of invisible light helps this former FFA member level cropland for irrigating farmers

ROB Roberts believes in it. "It's definitely improved our business," he says emphatically.

The "it" Roberts speaks of is a thin beam of invisible light—a laser light—which helps level cropland to near perfection. For farmers who use flood irrigation, Roberts' laser land-leveling service is worth its weight in gold. Accurate leveling makes for efficient water-usage and prevents fertilizer leaching.

"Studies at universities say you can use up to 35 percent less water because of the constant flow," says Mr. Roberts. "It can raise your crop production by holding more fertilizer, and less water usage will make you more money."

The former FFA member from Aurora, Nebraska, says the service is one of several offered by "Mid Nebraska Land Developers," a business Roberts owns and manages. Other services include pit digging, raising dams and tree removal. He hires three equipment operators to run the big equipment. Rob's wife, Tammy, is also active in the business.

Rob first became interested in land leveling as a sophomore vo-ag student at Aurora High School, where he graduated in 1974. "I've been doing it solid on my own now for four years, as my own business," he says.

Irrigated farming is big business in Nebraska, so water efficiency is impor-

tant. That became apparent last year, says Rob, with the drought. "The lower irrigation costs alone, I think, will pay for a lot more leveling in the future. More than we're doing now," Rob estimates. "Most all cropland around here has been leveled at one time or another, but so much of it is done by the eye, it's just not accurate. That was one of the reasons for using the laser. The accuracy makes a lot of difference."

Here's how it works: first, a farmer determines the exact slope needed in a field. "My wife and another hired man do the surveys," says Rob. "You can use the laser to survey by just driving over the field."

When a field is ready to be leveled, Rob and his machine operators place a laser, charged by a 12-volt battery, on top of a tripod at the field's edge. An invisible, revolving light beam shoots out from the tower and is picked up by a receiver attached to a tractor-powered grader or land plane. From there, the field operator simply drives over the field. He closely watches a leveling monitor on the tractor and makes adjustments by hand—or lets the machine do it automatically. "There is no limit as to what the grade has to be because of the accuracy of the machine," Says Rob. "It's within 2/100 of an inch accurate."

That accuracy has helped build an appreciative following for Rob's busi-

ness. "It does draw a lot of attention," Rob smiles. "We've had lots of phone calls, people saying, 'I heard you have a laser. I have some spots that won't go through this year. Can you come this fall and fix it?'"

Rob thinks the increase in business means farmers are concerned about high irrigation costs. "A farmer pumping water for three days on a poorly-leveled field could water it in two days after we've leveled it accurately," says Rob.

Costs for the service are not cheap. But then, neither is the sophisticated machinery. "If you want to set up one machine, a laser and receiving system, it'll cost between \$14,000 - \$17,000," estimates Rob. "The tractor and land plane are separate."

Rob says he plans to expand business eventually, but since land leveling is seasonal—autumn is their busiest time—the future is hard to predict. "One of our goals is to have more lasers and scrapers," he says. "But the next thing I'd like to get is a computer. We've figured a way that we can survey with the laser and put the survey numbers into an Apple II computer. We can make about any land leveling design we want to in five minutes."

"It's expensive," he says, "but it'll save a lot of time. That's the only way we can make money is by saving time. There's not much of it." ●●●



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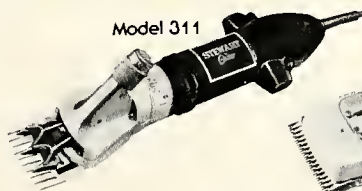
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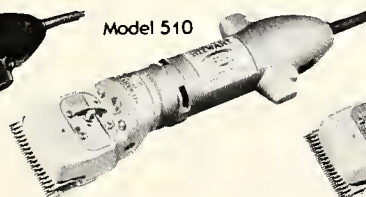
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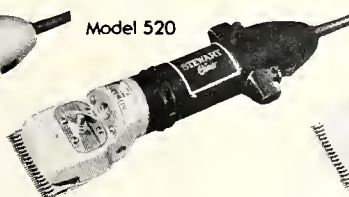
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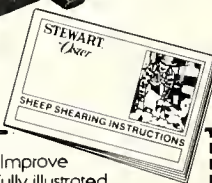
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Here's The Beef

Each year commodity organizations supported by farmers spend millions to "beef up" domestic and foreign demand for farm products with catchy slogans and slick commercials.

A successful campaign means more return to the producers.

WHEN it comes to market development, livestock producers have a lot at steak, pardon the pun.

In fact, farmers who produce all types of commodities—like beef, pork, milk, soybeans, potatoes or eggs—need a market for their products. After all, selling the final product is the reason why farmers produce in the first place. If demand for a particular commodity goes up, so do your returns.

That's why millions of dollars—probably the most ever—will be spent this year to advertise "generic" farm products nationwide. It's called "generic" because groups promote an entire *type* of food rather than a certain company's food. Instead of trying to convince a consumer to buy one egg over another, a group tries to expand *total* demand for the product.

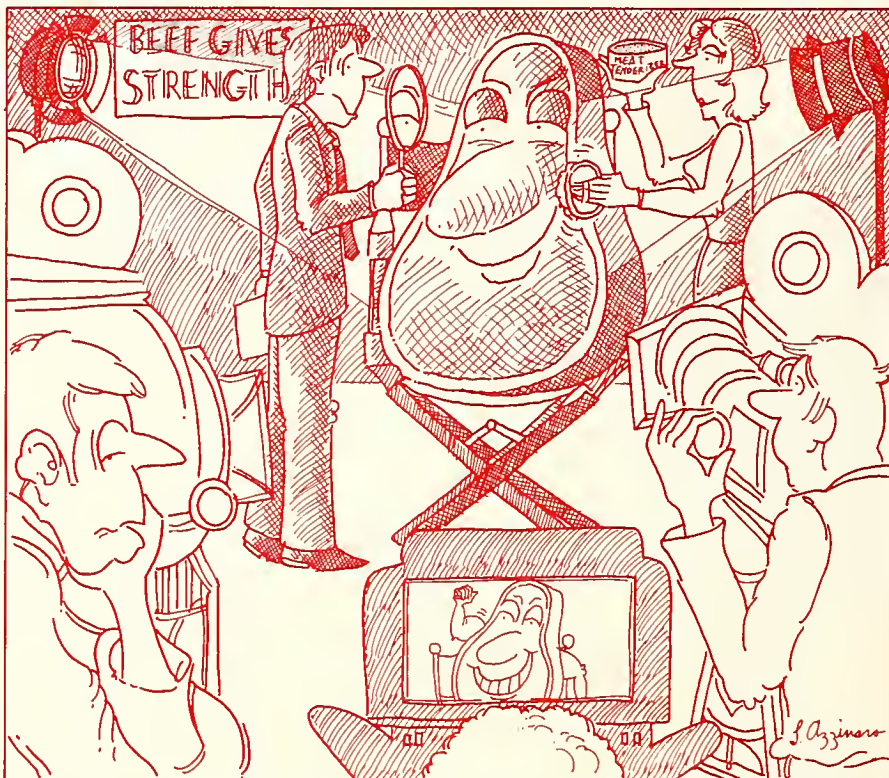
Organizations which produce these ad campaigns are supported by farmers—like yourself or your parents—usually through a "checkoff" system. This means each producer gives a specific dollar amount based on the producer's production. For example, each time a cattleman sells a steer, he donates, say, 25 cents per head to the checkoff. That money, in turn, is used for promotion.

The Beef Industry Council (BIC) of the National Live Stock and Meat Board is heavily involved in promoting beef. Last year, 36 state checkoff programs generated \$16 million for state and national promotion. About 40 percent of the money goes to state programs, while \$10.6 million goes to the national organization.

"Our only goal is to build consumer demand for beef," says Bob Mertz, revenue development coordinator for BIC. "Since we can't control supply, we strictly work on the demand side through advertising and promotion. We know that advertising pays, or else people wouldn't be doing it."

BIC also does work in research and education. In fact, you may have already seen a slide show in ag class that BIC put together on carcass identification. But the organization's major goal is to develop markets through advertising and promotion. \$7.5 million last year was earmarked for that function.

"That's not much compared to Mc-



Donald's, which spends about \$400 million a year in advertising," says Mr. Mertz. "Wendy's 'Where's The Beef?' campaign cost about \$8 million, and that was for just the first six weeks of the campaign."

Indeed, only 2 percent of the \$3.6 billion spent for food and beverage

Commodity groups spent about \$84 million on advertising in 1982, up from \$28 million ten years earlier.

media advertising in 1982 came from producer groups. These commodity groups spent about \$84 million in 1982 on advertising, up from only \$28 million 10 years earlier.

From these campaigns come an assortment of well-known slogans which you may recognize: "Milk—it's fitness you

can drink," or "The incredible, edible egg," or "A day without orange juice is like a day without sunshine," or BIC's latest offering, "Beef Gives Strength," shown on prime-time television, radio and in several national magazines. The "Beef Gives Strength" campaign follows on the heels of BIC's \$6.1 million effort in 1982—"Somehow, nothing satisfies like beef."

Sure they sound catchy. But each of these slogans are the result of meticulous research in the consumer market. In fact, five separate pieces of consumer research were evaluated before BIC changed slogans from one year to the next.

How effective?

"America is leaning on pork," another jingle flashed before U.S. consumers, is part of a nationwide campaign sponsored by The National Pork Producers Council to increase demand for pork. Charles Harness, director of industry information, thinks the \$2.5 million NPPC campaign has gone far to change people's

attitudes about pork.

"Last year was our second full year on the campaign," says Mr. Harness, "and research showed that the percentage of Americans who ate little or no pork, 40 percent, was reduced to 36 percent. It doesn't sound like much, but it represents a gain of nine million new pork users."

Other such studies seem to indicate the same effect. A 1980 study conducted for

the United Dairy Industry Association evaluated the effectiveness of generic fluid milk advertising expenses in ten U.S. milk marketing areas. It found that dairy farmers received an average net return of \$2.20 for each dollar spent on generic advertising. A Chase Econometrics study found that checkoff-funded export promotion by the American Soybean Association increased average U.S. soybean prices 8 cents per bushel yearly. The study also found that farmer-funded export expansion for soybeans increased gross soybean income \$57.50 per dollar invested.

With statistics like that it's no wonder many farmers gladly vote for state mandated checkoffs. "Producers have changed their attitude in the last three or four years," says Mr. Mertz. "In 1980, 6 million dollars went to beef promotion; today, it's 16 million. In 1980 only four states had checkoff rates above 25 cents per head; today, 31 states have rates of 25 cents or higher."

Foreign Demand

Some checkoff-funded groups don't need fancy slogans to catch the eye of American consumers. But they still work

to increase demand for a specific commodity. The American Soybean Association (ASA), mentioned earlier, works primarily to increase foreign demand for American soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal.

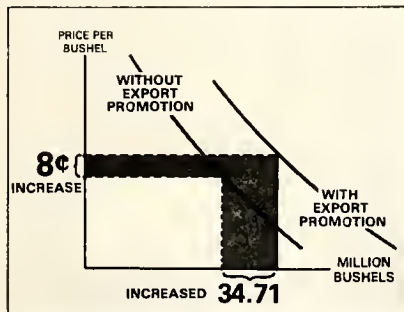
"That's because 55 percent of the U.S. soybean crop is exported," explains Dan Reuwee, public relations manager for ASA. "The main difference between our group and the meat board is that their promotion is domestic. Most of ours is foreign, educational work, where we're showing people how to use soybeans."

ASA conducts 200 export promotion activities in 76 countries, offering seminars, literature translation and trade team visits to U.S. facilities. The organization often sponsors feeding trials in foreign countries, providing soybean meal to swine and poultry producers to use in a ration compared to locally-grown rations. "99 times out of 100 they'll see that the corn/soybean meal ration is more efficient, with better gains," says Mr. Reuwee. "That, in turn, means more demand for soybeans."

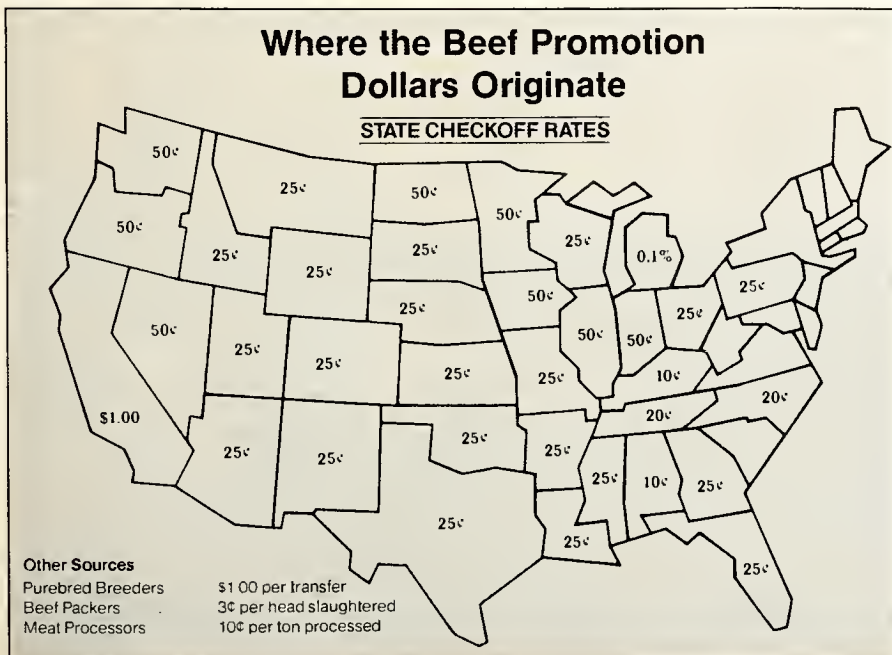
Mr. Reuwee, a former director of information at the national FFA organization, says the soybean checkoff system is "probably one of the first for a crop commodity," and is supported primarily by farmers. USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service also provides funds.

Soybean farmers from 24 states participate in the checkoff, and the amount varies from state to state. "It's as low as 1/2 cent per bushel in some states, as high as two cents per bushel in others," says Mr. Reuwee. "Not much when you consider a 30 bushel/acre yield would then cost a low-end producer 15 cents per acre, or 60 cents per acre on the high end. We like to say the checkoff costs less than a cup of coffee an acre."

The ASA official says it's important to note that the use of soybean checkoff funds is controlled by farmers at every level. "Each state has a 'promotion board' made up of farmers, usually elected by other farmers," he says. "They decide how much of the funds should be used in the state for soybean research and how much should be used to fund ASA export promotion work."



Above, Chase Econometrics reported that export promotion increased soybean farmers' yearly profit margin and increased average soybean prices eight cents a bushel in each of the last 11 years. Below, a map shows checkoff rates for beef producers.



"We Want To Run The Farm . . ."

Three teenage future farmers set out to operate their family's farm with close-fisted money management
—and lots of teamwork.

By Cliff Kneale

TAKE all three of Mel and Sharon McDonald's sons and wrap them into a single person. The result might be one very experienced 45-year-old farmer.

Better yet, take the three future farmers in question one at a time: 19-year-old Kevin, a state farmer, 17-year-old Kelly, a chapter farmer, and 12-year-old Eric, chomping at the bit for his turn to join FFA. Put them all together as a team and they operate and manage the McDonald family farm in Shedd, Oregon.

Kevin, a self described 'workaholic,' had an idea in 1979 which he introduced to his brothers. They liked the idea. Mustering their courage, they presented it to their parents:

"We want to run the farm," was the proposal.

"Great!" Mr. McDonald responded.

"Preposterous!" said mom, telling of the farm-life hardships they were certain to encounter.

Eventually, though, Mrs. McDonald relented. Today, the three young farmers are running about 200 head of producing ewes, 16 head of cattle for family and relatives and operate the "home place," the original 110-acre farm. They make use of 12 rented acres of wheatland from the local school district and lease another 147 acres from others for a total of 269 acres.

From such beginnings as a kitchen table family discussion, K & K Enterprises was born (the E in Enterprises belongs to Eric). And along with the business came the truth of their mother's predictions: bills, work and the headaches of a real, working farm operation.

"It was real hard at first, especially getting credit," says Kevin, spokesman for the farming trio. "We were so young, banks didn't want to just hand us money. I can't say as I blame them."

With their father's co-signature, they were able to obtain a \$7,000 loan which they used to purchase 75 head of producing ewes. Since then K & K Enter-



reinvested in the business. The marginal profits are used for equipment, land leases and increasing the livestock population.

Kevin plans to stay on the farm, but Kelly is seeking an athletic scholarship with hopes of becoming a professional athlete someday. He plans to major in agriculture in college. Eric is undecided beyond his desire to become a Future Farmer.

Up Before the Sun

Days begin early for the McDonalds, well before the sun is up. All chores must be completed before they can leave for school. Mr. McDonald hasn't been working on the "home place" since 1981; he manages his brother-in-law's farm. Both parents stay out of the business as much as possible. Mr. McDonald has financed a loan to K & K, but it's strictly business.

The three McDonald brothers somehow manage to finish schoolwork—usually done after dark—and still take part in a few extracurricular activities. But during lambing season, there is little time to breathe let alone try out for

(Continued on Page 31)

prises has been able to get \$10,000 each year for operating the growing farm. They did it with close-fisted money management, prompt bill paying and a whole lot of teamwork.

Kevin and Kelly still raise lambs as their SOE (Supervised Occupational Experience) Program in FFA. They don't consider the farm an FFA project.

"It's a business," Kevin says of the farm. "I've farmed since I was in the first grade, helping dad and learning. It's what I want to do with my life."

Profits from K & K Enterprises are

Above, from left to right, Kevin, Kelly and Eric McDonald are partners in "K & K Enterprises." Below, the three-wheel Honda is frequently used to help "round up" the flock.

Photos by Author





IT'S DIRTY WORK... BUT SOMEONE'S GOT TO DO IT!

You work hard all day helping to feed a hungry nation, so when it comes time to have some fun, you tend to play a bit harder than the average person. You might use those last fleeting moments of daylight to put in some hard, fast trail riding on your dirt bike. Or you might unhook the trailer from Big Red and turn it loose on the back forty.

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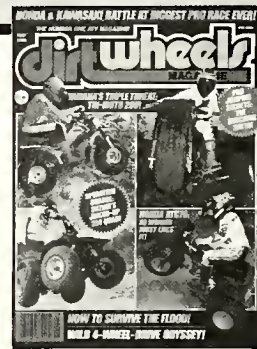
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FFA



Photos by Author

Master Mechanic

He uses torch and welder like an artist uses brush and canvas—with imagination, style and quality. The results are as impressive as any painting, and perhaps a bit more practical as well.

By Michael Wilson

Above, John Sousa, Jr. loads hay into the gooseneck livestock trailer he built as a high school vo-ag shop project. Right, hungry Holstein calves are fed in pens designed and built by the Chowchilla FFA member.



IF it has anything to do with ag mechanics, John Sousa, Jr. has probably already built it, welded it or bolted it together.

John, from Madera, California, is a robust young man of 20, built about as rugged as a stock trailer. He's someone vo-ag teachers fondly refer to as "mechanically-minded"—in other words, he has a special talent for building and repairing farm machinery.

John refined his talents into skills through vo-ag shop classes at the Chowchilla FFA Chapter, Chowchilla, California. The results of his training can be found scattered around the Sousa 80-acre family dairy farm, which John Sr. purchased 11 years ago. Mr. Sousa has been involved in the dairy business since he first set foot in California, settling here from Portugal.

"The only thing on this farm when we moved here was a milk barn and the house. Probably 90 percent of our equipment is hand made," John points out as we tromp through the Sousa's freshly-rained upon feedlot. Among John's shop creations is a long row of elevated calf pens, locking stalls, several fences and a feed tank. A rebuilt hay trailer here, a cattle feeder there—all products of John's precision and ability in ag mechanics. He uses an acetylene torch and arc welder like an artist uses brush and canvas—with imagination, style and quality. The results are as impressive as any painting—and perhaps a bit more practical as well.

His most difficult project—and by far the most convincing piece of handiwork—is John's 28-foot gooseneck stock trailer. "I wax it before every fair," he says admiringly.

Indeed, the shiny new trailer is every bit the stockman's dream. John installed upper front doors for tack boxes and hay, non-slip matting inside and a hidden side ramp for easy side loading. Complete with signal and brake lights, heavy duty

construction and a flashy white coat of enamel, it's no wonder people are amazed when they learn the implement was built by a high school vo-ag student. "One of the nicest compliments was from a manufacturer who said it was so professionally made it didn't look like a high school project," adds John proudly.

A Dream Becomes Reality

The trailer, however, was literally only a dream two years ago. The Sousas saw a need for a stock trailer at home for moving calves, not to mention transportation between shows, fairs and sale barns. Hence, it was decided, John would put his ag mech skills to a supreme test.

He and Chowchilla ag mechanics instructor Steve Obad sat down to discuss the project. An ambitious plan was developed. One problem was getting started.

"We had only built one other stock trailer before, but none this detailed," says Mr. Obad. "It was a learning process for all of us in the whole program." (Fortunately that previous experience was also a Sousa project: a pull-behind trailer which John had fondly labeled "the Blue Demon." A Madera feed company bought the trailer for \$4,000 after John converted it into a "deck" neck trailer.)

"At first, I had no blueprints to go by

for a trailer this big," recalls John. "But I got ideas for my own off of six different

SOUSA: "At first, I had no blueprints to go by for a trailer this big. But I got ideas for my own off of six different trailers, using snapshots and little sketches I had made."

trailers, using snapshots and little sketches that I had made."

John set up camp in the Chowchilla vo-ag shop and went to work. He devoted months to the project, planning details, ordering materials, refining blueprints, making adjustments and then diving into the construction. An all-conference lineman in high school, John put in many hours on weekends and after football practice. "Sometimes I would work until one or two at night," John recalls, "and get up early in the morning to help my dad put hay in and feed the cows. I tried to do as much of my school work during school hours."

The effort paid off in spectacular fashion. After 900 hours of labor, "thousands of welds" and \$6,500 in materials, John's trailer was finished. "Only trouble was, come the day to pull it out, we

(Continued on next page)

A successful shop project calls for detailed blueprints, which John and Instructor Steve Obad review below. Right, John demonstrates just one of several skills needed for a finished product. "Probably 90 percent of our equipment is hand-made," says John.



Mechanic

(Continued from Page 19)

couldn't get it out of the shop," laughs John. "So we let all the air out of the tires and a friend of mine pulled it out with a fifth wheel hook-up."

Since that time John has earned several awards for his prize work, including the western region Ag Mechanics proficiency award, sponsored by International Harvester. But the real payoff is the many hours of use the trailer has seen on the farm. "I've been offered up to \$18,000 if I want to sell it," says John, "but we've increased the efficiency of our operation with it."

John's achievement is a result of a special talent, true. But his vo-ag training was a guiding force. Mr. Obad says students at Chowchilla are allowed to start building projects only after they've learned the basics of metal work, welding and torch work. "The students who demonstrate interest, motivation and proficiency are given more responsibility, and potentially larger projects. John was one of them," he says.

John says, "You're always learning, getting on-the-job experience. They tell you about something in the classroom, but the next day you'll go out to the farm

"They tell you about something in the classroom, but the next day you'll go out to the farm and experience it. You couldn't do that in math class."

and experience it. You couldn't do that in math class."

Not all of the former vo-ag student's "experiences" were as successful as the new stock trailer. John says he's suffered his share of flops as a beginner. "That's a learning process," he laughs. "I remember



Above, John dumps bales off the hand-built trailer.

when a couple bales hit a hay trailer I was building and went completely through it. I figured I had to put a couple more runners underneath it to support the hay."

Chowchilla shop students, though, go through numerous tests before they try to apply their knowledge, to help avoid those mistakes.

John's father has found his son's

Below, a close-up of the gooseneck trailer's blueprints reveals much needed detail. Bottom, loading calves into the trailer's side door.



mechanical skills useful on the dairy. One gadget the two have installed in the milk parlor automatically regulates the amount of grain each cow gets, based on milk production. John says it saves five tons of grain per month. Another contraption the Sousas built is a sprinkler system outside the milk barn. "We designed it out of blocks, pipe and galvanized sheet metal," says John. "It cleans any mud off the cows before they come into the barn."

Each device brings the dairy closer to its production goals. "What we've done is instead of increasing cows we've increased production—fed a better ration, at less cost, with more efficiency."

With John's new knowledge of welding techniques and other mechanical skills, his future—either in farming or mechanics—looks sound. He hasn't decided which area he wants to pursue, but he's currently planning to study diesel mechanics at a nearby college. "The dairy business isn't too good right now, but if things get rough, at least we can call this our own. I know my skills are useful here," he says, motioning at the farm. "If I need to repair some equipment I'm using I don't need to call anybody up. I'll do it myself and save the money." ●●●

Do You Have An Unusual or Unique Shop Project?



If so, let us know! We'll bet other FFA members will be interested to see your vo-ag shop project. Photos of the best entries will be published in an upcoming issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER*. Just send us your name, address, a black and white photo and description, plus a short statement from your FFA Advisor to verify your project, to: Shop Project, *The National FUTURE FARMER*, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, Virginia 22309. ●●●

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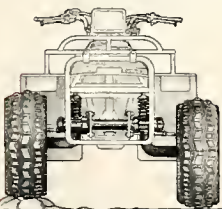


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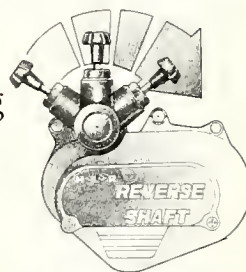
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Photos by Bill Staggs



Top, Star Agribusinessman of America Clint Albin, of Bush, Louisiana, says hard work and determination helped get "Albin's Greenhouse and Plants" off the ground. Above, central region star Jeff Heidrick, of Danville, Illinois, adjusts a baler as part of his hay and straw baling agribusiness.



How Became

Many vo-ag students
handful ever see them
how they made them

A GREENHAND watches closely as the Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman of America are announced at the National FFA Convention. He takes a deep breath and begins to dream: "Someday...I'll be up there on that stage..."

You're not alone if you've dreamed that dream before. Much glamour surrounds the Stars Over America pageant. After all, only two FFA members each year are named Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman. It's no wonder the dream is so inviting.

Many are content to dream. Only a handful work hard enough to make the dream become a reality.

But making that dream come true is a long, hard road with many challenges to overcome. As the following four FFA members will tell you, every little bit of advice helps. These four know. Each earned Star Agribusinessman honors at the 1983 National Convention.

Below is a personal achievement list—each star offers his own plan of advice for making your dream come true. Read carefully. Then take a deep breath and begin to dream: "Someday..."

Hard Work and Determination

"WHEN I was in the 9th grade I had no earthly idea I would become Star Agribusinessman," says Clint Albin, of Bush, Louisiana. "But the older I got the more I realized I could do it if I pushed myself. It just takes hard work and determination."

That kind of attitude earned Clint the title Star Agribusinessman of America, after winning the southern region title. Clint owns and operates "Albin's Greenhouse and Plants," a wholesale and retail nursery in his Louisiana hometown. Last year he produced over 10,000 ferns, managing the growing process from propagation to delivery.

Clint is currently a junior at Louisiana State University. He is majoring in agricultural education, "as a back up," but he wants to get back into the fern business full-time when he graduates. He and his parents, who have helped support Clint financially, currently plan an expansion of 15,000 square feet of growing space this summer. "There's a big demand for ferns right now," says Clint, who keeps control of the business by making telephone appointments at school. He heads home on school breaks and weekends to insure tight management of the operation.

Here, Clint lists five points he remembers helped make his dream become reality:

1. Desire. "We have to *want* to do it before we can accomplish something," he says. "I used to get discouraged because other people didn't also have that 'want to' feeling, but those people are still supportive. It's just that it's *you* who has to want it for yourself. No one else can."

"You have to work for whatever you get," Clint adds. "I've been taught that all my life. That's the way I want it to be,

The National FUTURE FARMER

A Dream me Reality

ream of becoming a Star Agribusinessman, but only a
goal accomplished. Meet four FFA members who explain
eam come true.

because if it's tough to come by, it's a lot sweeter."

2. Have confidence. "I think confidence is really important to succeed. We have to believe in ourselves first if we want others to believe in us as well," the Star Agribusinessman notes. "I have confidence that I'm living a quality life as well as producing a quality product."

Clint's confidence shows through in the way he handles his agribusiness. "People like to see that confidence in the marketplace," he says. "When it comes to a consumer-related project, a real confident person is going to make it in any business."

Clint thinks many younger FFA members may feel intimidated by older members, perhaps because Greenhands have participated in fewer activities or won fewer awards. "I don't think they should ever feel that way," he says. "Once you've had some experiences under your belt the confidence will be there. It's one of the most important things the FFA has taught me."

3. Aim for the clouds and rise above the crowds. Clint says, "I was always worried that I didn't have time for all the sports or the clubs. It seemed normal for my friends to do all these things. But even though I took ag and worked at a greenhouse in the afternoons, they still liked me."

"If they were my friends they were going to be my friends because I was me—not because I played football or was in FFA," he adds.

4. Have very supportive parents, ag teachers and friends. Clint says if it hadn't been for his parents, "I could never have done as much as I did. We can say we do a lot of things by ourselves and maybe make people believe it, but I don't think we really have."

"I really don't think anybody can be successful without this outside support," he adds.

5. Higher education. Clint thinks each high school student should decide if pursuing a degree in a college or university is needed for their career goal. It was for him. "With more use of high technology and computers, we don't want to be left behind," Clint says. But to Clint, an education doesn't necessarily have to come from a college or a university. "I believe a lot of times we are educated day to day, if we teach ourselves from our experiences. I think we have to view every day as a learning experience."

Set Your Goals

FOR Jeff Heidrick, central region Star Agribusinessman from Danville, Illinois, learning to set new goals has been an important lesson. Jeff grew up on a livestock farm, but was forced to switch from production agriculture to agribusiness when a hog disease wiped out his herd.

Jeff had already started a hay and straw baling service earlier in high school, which he expanded after the hog business was liquidated. In 1980 he began selling feed for

(Continued on Page 26)



Top, western region star Lyndon Taylor, of Thomas, Oklahoma, is a partner in the family-owned custom harvesting business. Above, eastern region star Glen Wenger, of Myers-town, Pennsylvania, takes a business call as general manager of Wenger's Farm Machinery, Inc., another family-owned business.

Careers in Agriculture

*"The great challenge is dealing with people.
You are with them at their happiest times
and at their saddest times."*



Floriculture

It's a career field ripe with opportunity, for both young men and women. But certain skills and creative talent must be developed first.

By Shirley Jones

LET'S face it. Few young men will ever know the thrill of opening their front door to a delivery person with a big bunch of dewey roses.

Whether given in joy, sorrow or "just because," flowers give a message we can't always put into words. The floriculture business thrives on the entire range of human emotions and feelings.

Behind all the feelings that result from bouquets and wreaths and bridal arrangements is a multimillion dollar industry that shows no sign of slowing down.

There are somewhere around 110,000 to 120,000 people employed by the floral industry according to Rex Boynton, director of Retailers Division at the Society of American Florists.

"That number has been growing by about 10 percent for each of the last three years," he says. People in the profession work in one of 24,000 retail florists across the United States.

Those numbers, however, were not what lured Ron Adkins, 19, of Raynham, Massachusetts, to work in a flower shop. The former state FFA vice president has been employed for 4½ years in a position in which he does everything from designing arrangements to taking orders by phone.

"I started out with the owner teaching me how to design," says Ron. Now, his daily chores cover a wide range of activities: going to greenhouses to buy plants, cutting flowers, pricing containers, bookkeeping, watering and feeding plants and even sweeping the floor.

"I was lucky to stumble onto a job that was so perfect for me," Ron says. Having gone to one of the few "agriculture" high schools in the country in nearby Bristol, Ron had the chance to try out various experiences before deciding he wanted to work in the floral industry. "By the time you're 16," he says, "I think you pretty much know if

you want to work with animals or plants. It just comes down to trying out a job and seeing if you like it.

"Many people say, 'I love flowers so much that I would like to work here,' and I don't think they understand how demanding the work really is," says Ron. It takes an outgoing personality to work with customers, a natural appreci-

***ADKINS: "Many people say,
'I love flowers so much that I
would like to work here,'
and I don't think they
understand how demanding
the work really is."***

ation for plants and a creative mind.

"The industry changes so much," says the 1983 eastern region floriculture proficiency winner. "If there is something new going on in floral design every month, you have to keep up with it."

A natural way to form the habits that make a person into a professional florist is to get as much education as possible. Rex Boynton says the education can be received in a variety of ways.

"People who don't have the finances or the wherewithall to get education beyond high school can do well," says Mr. Boynton. "But if you want to move

ahead, formal education is important."

A strong foundation can be laid by enrolling in a horticulture program with emphasis on retail flowers. "Virtually all the land grant colleges have programs," says Mr. Boynton. Notable are: University of California at Davis, Penn State University, The Ohio State University, Michigan State University, University of Florida and Cornell University. And, says Mr. Boynton, there are a wide range of two-year programs where a person can pick up the necessary training.

What is necessary training? It includes classes in flower care, handling and identification. Equally important, says Boynton, are courses in business administration, marketing, retailing or any others pertaining to management of a small business. "It doesn't really matter whether you're selling flowers or widgets," he says. "The key lies in solid management practices that will help a flower shop make a profit."

Mel Schwanke of Fremont, Nebraska, agrees. Owner and operator of a family business, Mr. Schwanke has been in the business for 38 years.

"You need accounting, math and management skills," he says, stressing that management of people is as important as the management of dollars. "We might have anywhere from 14 to 28 employees here, depending on the time of year," says Mr. Schwanke, "and we have to help them perform."

"I have the greatest profession in the world because I can serve people in all of their needs," says Mr. Schwanke. "In a town our size (pop. 25,000) I can be active in the community and in the church. That's what makes a full life of it."

Part of any successful business—including the floral profession—is having a good attitude toward other people.

"I believe everyone is born with this

ability," says Mr. Schwanke. "Some people just never develop it."

Along with good people skills must come dedication if a person is to play a major part in a floral business. "This job cannot be done without total concern year-round," he says. "We have long hours around Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Memorial Day." Add to that all the weddings, proms, funerals and other occasions for flowers, and you see why people have to be ever-ready to serve customers.

"The great challenge is people," says Mr. Schwanke. "You are with them at their happiest times and at their saddest

times. If you are willing to do the extra things, the rewards from your customers will be there."

Ron Adkins agrees. "Sometimes we'll get a thank-you note that says we did a really good job. That's one of the best rewards you'll ever get."

For more information, you can request by mail a brochure entitled, "Careers in Floriculture" which lists schools that offer degrees in horticulture, floriculture or floral design. Address your inquiry to: Society of American Florists, 901 North Washington, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. ●●●

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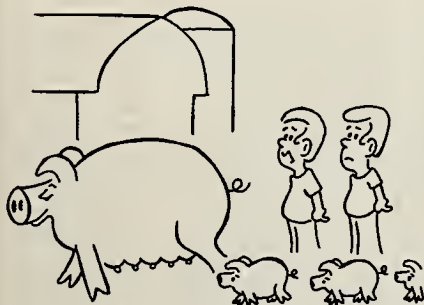
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deLORMIER

"We'd be mad too if we were hungry and our dinner table kept walking away from us."

Dream Became Reality

(Continued from Page 23)

Moorman Feeds, and quickly became one of the best salesmen in the area.

Today, both businesses keep Jeff busy. He plans to bale 250,000 bales of hay and straw this year. He has an even bigger goal for feed sales: to sell \$500,000 feed this year.

1. Set your goals. "Set your goals, keep them in mind and write them down. Work hard to obtain those goals," Jeff says. His advice: set both short and long term goals. "My short term goals include goals for the week and the year. My long term goals are where I'd like to be five to ten years from now," he adds.

2. Use knowledge gained from FFA. "I use data that I learned in FFA everyday," he says. "Whether it's public speaking skills while talking to feed customers or prospects, or using crop judging skills in buying and selling hay, those activities can help you reach your goals."

3. An excellent record keeping system. Jeff says, "In my business, I have got to know where my costs are coming from. If they are not where I know they should be, I start figuring out where the problem is." A good SOE (supervised occupational experience) program can help young FFA members establish good record keeping skills.

4. A good relationship with your banker. "A good banker is a valuable asset, both to me and my operation," points out Jeff. "I have always needed a banker that could see me as a productive individual. My business is not any different than anyone else's; you have to have money to make things go."

5. Keep up to date. "Stay on top of things," he stresses. "I am always trying new and innovative ideas to reduce labor and headaches. In my business, we constantly have to stay ahead and not fall behind. Satisfied customers mean return business."

Jeff says another important piece of advice is to listen to your elders, "especially your advisor. I attribute a lot of my success to my advisor. He was on my tail always pushing me onto higher goals. Most of all he stood behind me after a decision was made."

A Belief in Yourself

LYNDON Taylor, of Thomas, Oklahoma, earned Star Agribusinessman honors from the western region for his hard work and leadership in his family-owned custom harvesting business. A close-knit family business may be one reason why Lyndon says, "I honestly believe my success stems directly from the guidance, advice and rock-hard straight-forward determination my family has given me."

Lyndon currently studies agricultural economics at Oklahoma State University. He served as OSU legislative intern at the Oklahoma State Capital in Oklahoma City. "This experience has opened new doors for me, and given me the opportunity to learn from successful legislators," says Lyndon, who hopes someday to be involved in politics.

Beyond the support he's gained from his family, Lyndon offers this solid advice:

1. Believe in Yourself. "I firmly believe that before I could ever be a success, I had to believe in myself," says Lyndon. "I started by developing a positive attitude about what I was doing with my life."

"Many opportunities and experiences will pass you by if you don't have a positive mental attitude," he says.

2. Realize what your assets and opportunities are. "I realized early," says Lyndon, "that my greatest assets would lead me to my best opportunities. For me, those assets were

my family, my strong love for life, and my ability to take on responsibility. These assets have given me the opportunity to have success in FFA, sports, music and academics."

3. Use foresight, not hindsight. "I believe my greatest success lies in my future, not my past," points out Lyndon. "I have always looked to the future and established a plan of action. One of my favorite quotes is, 'You cannot change your past, but you can help yourself in the future.'"

"If the agricultural sector is going to survive as we know it now, it is going to need energetic people who have the initiative and desire to plan ahead and help us mold a more desirable future for farming and agribusinesses," says Lyndon.

4. Take affirmative action. "My dreams would never have become reality unless I was determined to go out and *do it*," says Lyndon. "You will never know how far your life can take you unless you try."

5. Continue to learn. Lyndon believes, "The world and your surroundings are your best classroom. And the mind is the greatest tool God gave us to work with."

An FFA Family Tradition

BEGINNING with his father, few FFA members can boast of the same family support and FFA achievement that Glenn Wenger has received on his upward trip to being named eastern region Star Agribusinessman. Glenn's father Carl earned the American Farmer degree in 1953. Thirty years later, Glenn Wenger received his American Farmer degree—the fourth of four Wenger sons to receive the degree. Three of the brothers were named eastern region star agribusinessman.

Glenn is vice president and general manager of Wenger's Farm Machinery, Inc., of Myerstown, Pennsylvania. The business is owned and operated by Carl, Glenn and his three brothers. Three sisters also work in the family business.

1. Family love and understanding. "My grandmother, mom and dad and my six brothers and sisters have always been there to share my victories," says Glenn, "but more important, they were there to support me when I fell short of my goals."

"There were so many times when I would attend to my FFA duties and my family would take care of my responsibilities," Glenn adds. His duties as state vice president contributed to his absence.

2. FFA involvement. Because of his father's and brothers' success, "I felt I had a reputation to live up to in the FFA," says Glenn. "But as I became active in the FFA I didn't feel I had to do it for anyone but myself. I soon found out that no matter how hard I worked on my projects or preparing for contests, the rewards always exceeded the efforts."

3. Accept responsibility. Glenn says, "When the opportunity comes along to make decisions or to take a chance, you must take advantage of it."

"The most valuable lessons I've learned were from my own successes and failures. Too often people are so afraid of failing that they accomplish little," he says. "If you take on responsibility and do your very best at handling it, your successes will be far more plentiful than your failures."

4. Cooperation. "Learning to deal with other people will often make the difference between success and failure," Glenn says. "I believe that two people working together can accomplish at least three times the work of one man working alone. When I communicate properly with an individual or a group, there isn't a problem I can't overcome."

5. Positive mental attitude. "The decision I made to maintain a positive mental attitude was by far the most profitable one I have ever made," Glenn says. "Financing, cost of supplies and availability of merchandise are items we don't always have control over. However, we as individuals *do* have control over our own attitudes." ●●●

A cowboy wearing a hat and vest is riding a brown horse through tall, golden-brown grass. The scene is captured in a warm, slightly blurred style, suggesting movement.

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A Smart S

By Michael Wilson

MELISSA Sherman's long golden hair and easy-going personality qualify her as a typical California girl. But any other stereotypes do little justice to this enthusiastic 18-year-old FFA member from Fallbrook, California. Melissa is her own person, making her own way in life. She has a smart set of values—especially when it comes to a future in the nursery business.

"I think it's really important to be happy with what you do," she says thoughtfully. "Being happy is more important than being impressive or having a lot of money. Being in the nursery business isn't like being a doctor or a lawyer, but at least I'll be happy."

That attitude has taken Melissa a long way in the Future Farmers of America. Three years ago, she helped lead the state-winning Fallbrook FFA ornamental horticulture team to a second-place finish at the national nursery/landscape contest, placing ninth individually. And in 1983 she won the national FFA nursery operations proficiency award, sponsored by Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation.

For all her accomplishments you would think Melissa had been growing and selling plants all her life. But she first became involved as a sophomore, when she began to grow ornamental plants in a nursery SOE program at home. Melissa was in the sixth grade when her family moved to Fallbrook from Long Beach, a

Left, Melissa Sherman ties a young tree to a pole for support. Below left, "hands-on" experience—literally. Below, helping a customer is Melissa's forte.



Photos by Author



et of Values

Combining a sunny outlook with top-notch marketing skills, this 18-year-old has carved a foothold in the ornamental horticulture business.

"very urban" area.

"My dad said it was getting too crowded in the city," recalls Melissa. "When we moved down here he bought an avocado grove and started managing other people's groves. He didn't know anything about it—he just decided he loved it and wanted to be a farmer."

One look at the Sherman homestead and it's no wonder Bruce Sherman fell in love. The 46-acre ranch and nursery lies in a wooded lot on the outskirts of Fallbrook, a short drive up the coast from San Diego. The family living room—spacious, with many windows to let the warmth filter in—joins a white house with an old-fashioned porch out front. Nearby, a wooden bridge leads a path to the nursery, filled with an army of colorful trees and flowers. A large mound of potting soil is shaded by a creaky barn where a few pigs try to stay cool in the California sun.

Marketing and "people skills"

An SOE program like nursery operations usually means FFA members must try to sell the plants and trees they grow. That means dealing with potential customers—not always an easy skill to master. For Melissa, "people skills" seem to come naturally.

"It's neat to talk to people because everybody's so different," says the state farmer. "It makes me feel good to know that people are happy with what I'm doing and to be able to provide a service to them."

Melissa recently completed her freshman year of ornamental horticulture studies at California Polytechnic State

University at San Luis Obispo. She first tested her marketing ability four years ago, when her chapter's ornamental horticulture team became state champions. The team looked for ways to raise money for the trip to the national judging contest in Kansas City, Missouri.

"We thought monthly plant sales would be good, and it worked out well," she recalls. "Afterwards, I thought if we kept that going I could still make some money with my plants. Since the recession was going on, it was hard to sell to nurseries, so I had to find a market before the plants got too big."

"We put up signs, advertised and sent out mailing cards," Melissa says. "People began to recognize we could sell nice plants at a cheap price."

The chapter's plant sales were a big hit.

SHERMAN: *"You can grow the most beautiful plants in the world, but if you can't go out there and sell them, you're going to lose money."*

But providing travel money for the team was not the only benefit. The sales also helped Melissa see her natural ability in marketing and people skills. "It gave me a chance to be a salesperson—not just send my plants to another nursery," she says. "I think that gives me an advantage of knowing what to grow over some people who never come in contact with the community."

"You can grow the most beautiful plants in the world, but if you can't go out there and sell them you're going to lose money. If you want to be successful, you've got to go out there. You can't wait for the people to come to you."

Those may be strong words. But they prove a valuable lesson for anyone involved in agriculture. "Unless you have contact with people in the community, you'll never know what they really want to buy," she explains. "If a lot of people came to our plant sale and said, 'Hey, I'm looking for a eucalyptus tree, do you have it?' And if I have so many people ask me for that type of tree I'll grow it, because I know there are people out there who want to buy it."

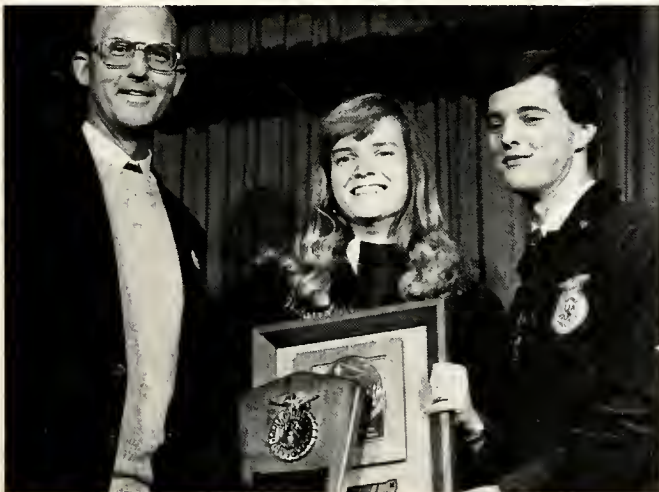
Melissa launched her nursery project by investing every penny of personal savings in plants. After she sold those, she reinvested—and the process was repeated, over and over. "For awhile there, I never had any money," she laughs. "But in the end it turned out to be a good experience."

That may be an understatement, for as Melissa will tell you, she has had many great learning experiences to be thankful for. She credits the strong guidance of Fallbrook FFA Advisor Bill Rienstra, and her nursery SOE program. "My project gave me the chance to be in business and to deal with people," she says. In addition, Melissa is grateful to the local Fallbrook ag booster club, which enthusiastically supports youth activities. "It's hard for us to get the money to go out and build facilities that we need," says Melissa. "If we need something we can count on them to help us out." The club raised \$10,000 last year to support Fallbrook FFA and local 4-H clubs.

Yet, even among such a helpful background, Melissa says vo-ag has been one of the most important experiences of all. "Vo-ag helped me find a career," she points out. "Since I had a nursery project before I went to college, I got a head start above the other people—I already have that 'hands-on' experience."

"You can learn about all this stuff at school, but that's not going to help you much unless you get out there yourself," Melissa adds. "You have to learn for yourself, whether it's dealing with plants or people."

Sounds like pretty smart advice—from a pretty smart girl! ●●●



Left, Melissa is all smiles as she accepts her national proficiency award in nursery operations. "I was floating on a cloud," she says. That's advisor Bill Rienstra, left, and former national officer Marty Coates, right, offering congratulations at the 1983 national FFA convention.

Chapter Scoop

by Jack Pitzer

A podium made by the *Fort Defiance* Chapter in VA went aboard the USS SHENANDOAH as part of the christening ceremonies. The commander of the Navy vessel wrote a letter of appreciation to the chapter saying that the wood and craftsmanship reminded the crew about their namesake the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

N-N-N

Mr. and Mrs. Kermit Schweers were awarded an Honorary State Farmer degree at the *Nebraska* state convention because their fourth son, Tim, had earned the State Farmer degree. Any parents who have four children who earn the degree are so honored by the association.

N-N-N

Tollesboro, KY, Chapter is helping the Lion's Club by rebuilding their barn to house steers and to operate their steer show. It will be for members in the area to prepare for the big show and sale later in the year.

N-N-N

In order to improve the image of FFA among other school organizations *Atwater*, CA, FFA sponsored a deep-pit barbeque for the varsity football team to commend them for a hard fought season. FFA also used landscaping and welding skills to fix a new soccer field and repair a soccer goalpost. Later a faculty break-fast was given by FFA.

N-N-N

Platte, SD, defeated *Geddes*, SD, in a volleyball match and won the trophy.

N-N-N

Monroe, GA, FFA calls their children's barnyard event a pet-n-farm.

N-N-N

"School's Open" bumper stickers were passed out in the community by *Le Sueur*, MN, FFA.

N-N-N

The recreation committee of the *Zillah*, WA, Chapter organized a trip to see the Mariners play the Yankees.

N-N-N



Featured on the *Lakeland*, FL, junior high school FFA-sponsored breakfast for school administrators and staff was the "one and only Egg MacFFA."

N-N-N

For teacher workday, the *Riner*, VA, Chapter prepared and served a barbequed chicken lunch.

FFA members who live in the area around Chicago and are involved in horticulture SOEPs participated in a floral design contest organized by the vo-ag teachers in the metropolitan area. The participants brought a St. Patrick's Day arrangement with them, then made a corsage and a centerpiece to be judged.

N-N-N

At the *Crestview*, OH, Chapter banquet, **Jaimee Durkin** "got even" for the last three years of teasing she'd taken as the only girl in the chapter. So she presented each guy a proficiency award of her own.

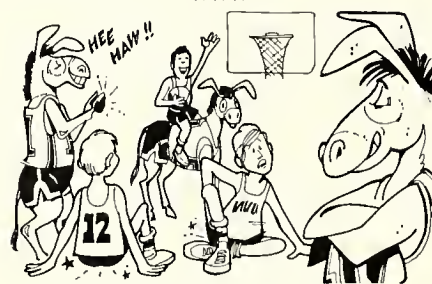
N-N-N

The *Apollo-Ridge*, PA, Chapter had wooden trains and trucks made by the members to give away during FFA Week.

N-N-N

Contest winners in the *Jefferson*, WV, Chapter were given a trip to the National FFA Center to tour the Supply Service and then a dinner out.

N-N-N



The *Turtle Lake*, WI, donkey basketball game resulted in lots of bumps and bruises, but lots of fun and fellowship for their community.

N-N-N

On the first day of the Idaho state FFA convention, members were given a test on parliamentary procedure. **Tony Wofford**, of *Meridian*, was the top scorer and earned the right to be parliamentarian for the delegate business session during the convention.

N-N-N

A small work force from the *Wilber-Clatonia*, NE, Chapter helped prune trees, cleaned up flower beds and yards in a low-income retirement housing village. They were also given help from a county extension staffer in learning to prune various trees.

N-N-N

For the Kiddy Fair run by *LaGrande*, OR, every member brings in a farm animal of some sort from rabbits to baby calves. Implement dealers bring tractors to climb on too. About 1,000 students visited the fair this year.

N-N-N

Russellville, MO, FFA sponsored a tractor rodeo at spring fever day at the mall. Local dealers donated tractors.

A hunter safety education class for anyone in the community was organized by the *Dorman*, SC, FFA in cooperation with the state Department of Wildlife and Marine Resources.

N-N-N

Yuma AZ, Chapter hosted an open house for incoming ninth graders. Members displayed different aspects of vo-ag like welding and sheep shearing.

N-N-N

Not only was the basketball game for charity (the county humane society), but the *Blissfield*, MI, FFA team "gave away" the game too and got beat by the WIOT Radio station team.

N-N-N



The vegetable team for *Elsinore*, CA, Chapter took second place in area field day for floriculture, vegetable, livestock and tractor judging teams.

N-N-N

Members of the *Anthony Wayne*, OH, Chapter parked 300 cars for a teacher symposium at the middle school.

N-N-N

To interest grammar school students in the FFA, *Housatonic Valley*, CT, FFA put a poster with three photographs of students from that school who are now in FFA. The first grammar school student to identify an FFA'er from his or her town wins an FFA T-shirt.

N-N-N

Each day during FFA Week, *Cumberland Valley*, PA, members brought a different farm animal to school. Then faculty and students enter a different contest about that animal such as guess the weight, heart girth or age.

N-N-N

Norwayne FFA in *Creston*, OH, made 72 quarts of homemade ice cream to serve 350 students in the school lunch line during FFA Week.

N-N-N

Newport, AR, FFA gave their new superintendent an FFA blazer during FFA Week.

N-N-N

On dress-up day during FFA Week for the *Sheridan*, WY, FFA, the freshmen members wore FFA sweaters and the rest of the members wore official dress.

N-N-N

Don't get the summer doldrums. Keep the cards and letters coming in with news and nifty ideas about your chapter.

Run the Farm

(Continued from Page 16)

sports or other school activities. Up to 200 lambs arrive within a 10-day period. It is during lambing season the three-wheel Honda gets a workout in the pre-dawn hours, checking on pregnant ewes and searching for new-born lambs. Through it all, the McDonalds still take care to remain on the honor roll at school.

Dividing up the work was no problem for the three young farmers. Kevin does most of the bookkeeping while Kelly and Eric perform everyday routine chores; then after the books are taken care of Kevin goes to work on the spread. "It all works out pretty even," he says. "We've managed to work out any difficulties we've come across."

The farm keeps them busy, but keeping in touch with school friends is hardly a problem. "Our friends think it's special that we work the farm," says Kelly, who notes that fellow classmates enjoy spending time on the farm, often offering to help.

Still, between school and the farm, finding time for everything isn't easy.

KELLY: "Our friends think it's special that we work the farm."

The three farmers see to it the ewes are bred to lamb during Christmas vacation, when they will have time to care for the animals. During the weeks before Christmas, one of the three will speed home from school during lunch hour to check on the bred ewes.

Even with the farm responsibility, there has been time to gain public recognition. Kevin's FFA work and farming helped him become chosen as one of the area's Junior Citizens two years ago. He made use of the financial experience gained while doing the farm's

budgeting in coursework. He did so well he's been called upon to help teach the course. His public speaking experience in FFA helped when he addressed a local banquet. "I doubt if I could have presented myself as well in the business community without the public speaking knowledge I've acquired through Future Farmers," Kevin says.

Kelly agrees. "I know how to present myself without being nervous," he says. Both Kevin and Kelly agree the work on their SOE programs and the close working relationship with their FFA advisor is a good thing. "It keeps us from becoming too one-directional in this

farming business," says Kevin. "It helps me to deal with people on all levels, business and social."

The future of K & K Enterprises, according to the McDonald brothers, is growth. They plan to buy more crop land, better machinery and livestock on a "one-step-at-a-time" basis. "We don't want it to grow too fast, then find ourselves unable to afford to stay in business," Kevin says.

So far, the business has paid the bills with a little left for reinvestment. As the brothers each grow older and acquire more management skills, the future looks unlimited. ●●●



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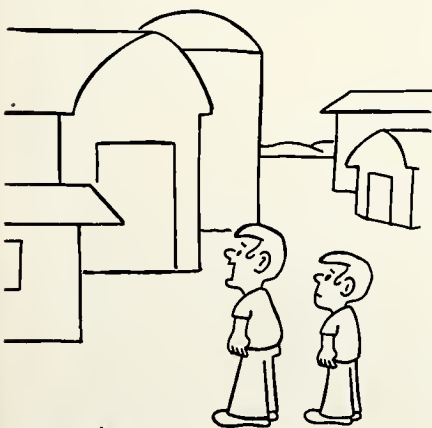
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"All this will be ours someday. Which is why I'm going to be a doctor."

FOUR years ago, Ernie Van Leeuwen of Scio, Oregon, persuaded his non-farming parents to go into the dairy business. It's a decision both Ernie and his parents have never regretted.

Ernie admits it wasn't easy. He had to start out by renting an old abandoned dairy ten miles from home. He raised day-old calves up to become producing milkers, because the family couldn't afford full-grown animals.

Now, Ernie's "old abandoned" dairy milks 100 cows twice daily; 200 animals make up the herd. Today, he manages a multi-hundred-thousand dollar dairy business—all at the age of 25.

As a little boy, Ernie often begged his parents to take him to visit friends who had Jersey cows so he could see their "big brown eyes." As an FFA member at Scio high school, Ernie's love for milk cows continued. When he pressed his mom and dad to go into the dairy business, his parents made him a deal.

"Ernie," said Gene and Ivy Van Leeuwen, "you go to college for two years and stay on the honor roll. Then if you're still insistent about going into the dairy business, we'll do so."

Ernie enrolled at Linn-Benton Community College where he took business and agriculture courses. He also stuck to

his end of the bargain. By spring of his second year, the honor student reminded his parents of their promise.

Ernie's parents honored their word and began making plans to go into the dairy business. The family decided to raise day-old calves, to avoid the huge investment—not to mention the 12 percent interest rate—needed to buy mature cows, which would have cost \$800 to \$1200 each.

"We chose to pay as we went," says Ivy Van Leeuwen. "It was a lot of work but we thought it was the only way to go. We had not been in the dairy business before and Ernie was young

Below, Ernie Van Leeuwen is all smiles at his renovated dairy.

A Deal Is A Deal !

His parents agreed that the family would start a dairy if Ernie made it through college with honors. Ernie hit the books . . .

By Elaine Dahl Rohse



Below, Pinto, a Van Leeuwen Holstein, is in seventh heaven when about 40 head of Corriedale and Suffolk sheep.



and had no track record."

Ernie, who was just finishing college, began contacting some 70 dairies within a 150-mile radius, hunting for day-old Holstein calves. The family began purchasing calves at about \$30; by the time their calf-buying budget had run out, the market was asking about \$80 each.

Mrs. Van Leeuwen, a teacher in the Albany district, found herself spending summer vacation as chief calf-raiser, at times feeding as many as 45 calves a day. Meanwhile, Ernie, who had just finished school, was holding down two jobs—milking for another dairyman and doing maintenance work at a cannery. Ernie's

scratches her neck. Inset: the family owns

Photos by Author



father Gene works fulltime at a building products store.

Ernie needed to find a site for the prospective dairy. He found a former Grade A dairy and 20 acres to rent ten

Mrs. Van Leeuwen found herself spending summer vacation as chief calf-raiser, at times feeding as many as 45 calves a day.

miles from the 30-acre home place.

Ernie and his parents began working 17- to 20-hour days. They installed feeders in the milking parlor, put in pipe lines, added an 800-gallon milk tank and rubber mats to the parlor floor.

Then, all too soon, the new herd started calving—even before the milking parlor was ready. Ernie's 23-year-old sister, Dawn, came home from college to train the herd to milk.

Somehow, everything fell into place. Ernie Van Leeuwen, as per his dream, was running a dairy farm.

Ernie ships his milk to Farmers Cooperative Creamery, McMinnville, Oregon, where he is a member. Every day the FCC hauler picks up milk which is stored in the stainless steel tank at the Van Leeuwen dairy. The co-op, some 50 miles from Scio, produces powdered milk, butter and ice cream mix.

Ernie is paid Grade A rates for the number of pounds of quota he holds. If he produces more than this, he receives a lesser price. In Oregon, which has its

Below, part of the herd which is kept at the dairy. Below right, Ernie visits with fieldman Art Johnson of Farmers Cooperative Creamery, in the new milking parlor.



own quota system, Ernie "earned" quota-based on his production and the Class I sales of the market. He also purchased additional quota to more nearly match his production.

Looking back over four years of milking, Ernie admits it was more work than he expected. And, he confesses, "I don't like being out in the barn 20 hours a day." He arises at 3:45 a.m. and consistently puts in 15- to 17-hour days. But a relief milker has helped break the routine.

Ernie even went to school again—this time to learn artificial insemination techniques. But, says Mrs. Van Leeuwen, "that has paid for itself many times over." It has also enabled Ernie to make accurate three-month pregnancy checks.

Ernie, responsible for managing the dairy operation, says "I like to make decisions for myself. It's just something you have to do," he reflects. "It gets easier—even though right decisions may not always be made."

Managing this business has also meant a new home for Ernie. He now lives in a trailer at the renovated dairy.

Ernie says getting a dairy started by raising calves on a rented dairy ten miles from home isn't the easiest way to get into the business. He is convinced that dairying "is the way to go as long as the cows pay the bills." Unlike some farmers, neither he nor his mother want any part of dairying "just for the fun of it."

But despite the hard work, Ernie figures the results are worth it. At 25-years-old he's managing a multi-thousand dollar business while doing what he loves most: working with cows.

After all, Ernie kept his end of the deal! ●●●





National Officer ACTION Update

Your National FFA Officers recently returned from Japan, Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China where they observed international agriculture.

The international experience program for national officers was part of a long comprehensive educational program which national officers undergo after they take office. The trip, sponsored by Mitsui & Company, Ltd., gave the six officers an excellent introduction to differences and similarities of agriculture abroad.

FFA staff who accompanied the officers on the tour were Lennie Gamage, national FFA international specialist and Cameron Dubes, national FFA director of information.

One of the first visits in Japan was to an agricultural high school, Noge High School. Upon arriving at the school, the officers were greeted by many excited members of the Future Farmers of Japan (FFJ) who were to be the officers' hosts during the brief school visit.

Following a green tea ceremony and a tour of the school grounds the officers were officially greeted over lunch by Mr. Komatsu, one of the FFJ's national

advisors; Mr. Yamamoto, FFJ national representative and Mr. Togawa, national FFJ president and several FFJ members from nearby agricultural high schools.

Later in the week, each officer spent two days with host families and students from Tajima Agricultural High School located in a mountainous agriculture region of Japan. The officers communicated only with sign language and language dictionaries.

For the officers to develop a better understanding of exports, imports and agriculture by-products, Mitsui arranged visits to several companies.

The officers visited a huge Tokyo vegetable market, a warehouse and wharf operation, a feed plant, sugar processing plant, an oil and meal processing plant, a diesel plant and a Yanmar tractor plant where John Deere has some of their smaller tractors built.

Although the tour encompassed several educational visits to agricultural production sites and agribusinesses, it was not all business. The officers were treated to visits of several Japanese temples and shrines, toured Tokyo, rode the famous bullet train, visited Mount Fuji, and were treated to several traditional Japanese meals.

Before returning to the United States, the officers were able to visit the bustling trade city of Hong Kong and take a one-day tour of the People's Republic of China as the last stop on the itinerary. (Cameron Dubes) ...

A Prize For The Most Popular Kisser In The School



Teacher Dan Cox was a good sport in kissing the pig for the FFA fund raiser.

The Mississinawa Valley FFA in Ohio sponsored a "Kiss the Pig" contest during National FFA Week.

The student body voted on the teacher they most wanted to kiss a pig. The \$120 they raised went toward a scholarship for a senior student.

The teacher who won the contest was Mr. Dan Cox who is a social studies teacher at the school. (Amy Powell, Reporter) ...

Murtie Goes To School Too



The newest addition to the River View vo-ag program in Warsaw, Ohio, is a 450-pound sow named Murtie. As part of a freshman animal science unit studying swine, the members decided to raise a litter of pigs in the back corner of the shop. This way new members could obtain some first hand skills in working with young pigs. Murtie, a large white sow, is one of 50 sows and gilts on the school farm. She was crossed with a young Hampshire boar purchased at the OSU (Ohio State University) Boar Test Sale last fall. Shortly after this picture was taken, she farrowed 15 pigs and has successfully raised 14 of them. ...

Three in One

In 1983, the three Sheldon brothers made it 100 percent. The last brother earned his American Farmer degree. The Sheldon brothers attended Tri-County FFA in Wolcott, Indiana. Each brother at some time worked for other area farmers in FFA's supervised occupational experience program. They participated in leadership contests, livestock judging and soil judging. After high school, each took a college course and applied for the degree.

Ronnie Sheldon attended Purdue after high school graduation and took a course in animal science. He worked on a hog farm near Rensselaer for three years which was during the time he applied for the American Farmer degree. He received it in 1981.

Since then Ronnie has managed a 250-sow hog farm for Lloyd Kyburz where they sell purebred and F1 boars and gilts. Ronnie and his wife Vanessa live near Wolcott.

Paul Sheldon attended Ellsworth College in Iowa for a one-year course in swine confinement management. He earned the American Farmer degree in 1982. He worked one year as assistant manager for Don Furrer before becoming manager three years ago. This total confinement set-up includes 500 sows. Last year a total of 8,500 pigs were marketed from there. Paul and his wife Mary have two daughters.

Donnie Sheldon began working part-



At the Noge High School in Tokyo national officers were greeted and presented gifts from the FFJ members.

National President Ron with National FFJ President Mr. Togawa.



time at the Furrer Farm in his sophomore year. After high school graduation, he attended a nine-week swine management course at Ellsworth College. Upon returning he began work full time as assistant manager for the Don Furrer Farm. He earned the American Farmer degree in 1983.

Ronnie, Paul and Donnie have a sister Suzanne who is working on the Chapter Farmer degree at Tri-County. Their parents, Bill and Georgia Ann Sheldon, are pleased that each son had "earned it on his own." (Pat Alberts) •••

They Wrote for Scholarship Money and Got It

Jim Buresh, a senior member of the North Bend, Nebraska, FFA Chapter, won a \$1,500 college scholarship from Valmont Industries, Inc.

He was the first place winner in an essay contest which was open to all graduating high school seniors who are active members in a Nebraska Association FFA chapter. Each participant was required to write a 750-1,000 word essay on "Water Conservation and/or Energy Savings Through Mechanical Sprinkler Irrigation." Entries were submitted by students from all across the state.

Valmont presented a \$500 U.S. savings bond to each of the four regional winners, plus a \$1,500 college scholarship to the first place winner.

The other three finalists were: Mike Roeber, a senior member of the Ashland-Greenwood Chapter; Debbie Schick, a senior member of the Medicine Valley-Curtis Chapter; and Lisa L. Clarke, a senior member of the Broken Bow Chapter.

In addition to the scholarships, Valmont presented a \$500 corporate donation to the Nebraska Association. •••



Essay winners, from left to right, Debbie Schick, Medicine Valley-Curtis FFA, regional winner; Lisa Clarke, Broken Bow FFA, regional winner. Back row, Jim Buresh, North Bend FFA, state winner; Tom Hester, director of marketing, Valmont Industries, Inc.; Mike Roeber, Ashland-Greenwood FFA, regional winner.

Their Success is Showing



Louisiana FFA is proud of their group of champions exhibited at the recent state livestock show. These members are just some of the top placings earned by members at the 49th annual show held on the Louisiana State University campus. Many other achievements were accomplished by members of the Louisiana FFA not only at the state show, but also at the district shows held prior to this. On left is the grand champion market steer, weighing 1,201 pounds, exhibited by David Kahl of Northshore FFA in Slidell. At right is the grand champion market hog, weighing 261 pounds, exhibited by Luke Doise, Elton FFA. •••



The chapter sponsors a bike-a-thon each year with the proceeds going to the American Cancer Society. Members are responsible for everything from getting people of all ages to ride to presenting the prizes.

A Fund Raiser On Two Wheels Went The Distance

The Osceola FFA Chapter in Osceola, Missouri, sponsored a bike-a-thon for the American Cancer Society.

A bike is given away in two age divisions—12 and under, and 13 and over—for the most money raised. Watches were also given away to the one in each age division that rode the most miles.

The second bike-a-thon was held this year in October. When the money was turned in and counted the proceeds came to \$2,000. Two of the chapter Greenhands came out on top this year in

the older division with one winning the bike and the other winning the watch.

The FFA members are responsible for all aspects of the bike-a-thon. Presentations are made by FFA members to the students in the elementary grades. Posters are made to advertise in town and newspaper articles are written to let the community know of the bike-a-thon. FFA members are encouraged to participate whether it be riding or working. (Donna Wheeler, Reporter) •••

(Continued on Page 38)

New in Agriculture

Right, the new *Show-pac* Care Kit is specifically designed to relieve stress in show calves and lambs, according to Pioneer, makers of the kit. Included in the package is a 60cc syringe of PROBIOS brand Bovine One, which helps correct bacteria imbalance in the digestive tract. Also included: a two-pound jar of PROBIAS brand 180D, a powder for the animal's feed.



Below, now farmers can reduce time and money spent on mowing non-pasture grass by 50 percent with *Embark PGR*, a plant growth regulator introduced recently by 3M. The chemical was originally developed to suppress turfgrass growth in public parks and along highways. For more information, write: Agricultural Products/3M, 223-IN-05, 3M Center, St. Paul, Minnesota 55144.



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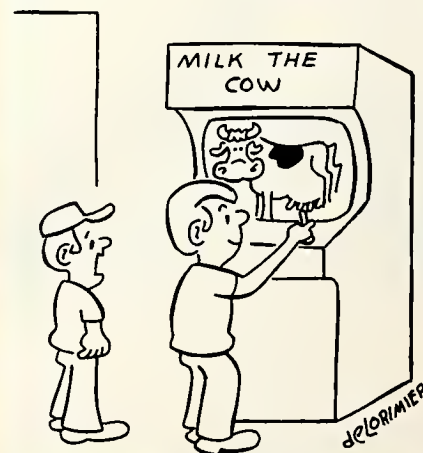
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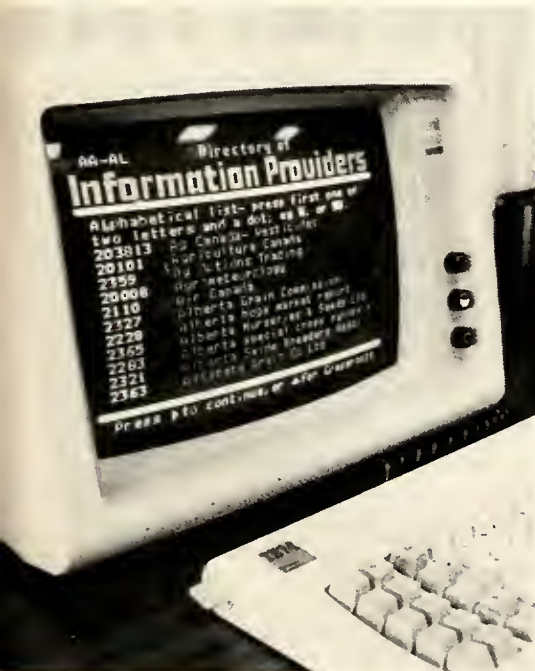
Right, all-terrain vehicles, or "three-wheelers," are becoming more and more popular. This spring Kawasaki introduced a new line of three-wheelers. Pictured is the smallest and lowest-priced, the *KLT110*, with a five-speed transmission and automatic clutch. Below right, Grassroots America introduces its *Grassroots* computer service, which a company spokesperson calls "the first full-color, full-scale, two-way interactive videotex service for farmers in the United States." Among other things, Grassroots gives farmers instant 24-hour access to markets, farm management programs and colorful weather maps in a 50-mile radius.



"I'll skip that one. I do it every day."



Left, Raytec Manufacturing introduces their new *Way Pig* litter scale, which kills two birds with one stone: weighing and conveniently transporting pig litters. An easy-to-read gauge shows litter weight in both pounds and kilograms. A built-in tray holds veterinary supplies, medicines or other tools. For more information write: Raytec Manufacturing, RD #3, Ephrata, Pennsylvania 17522.



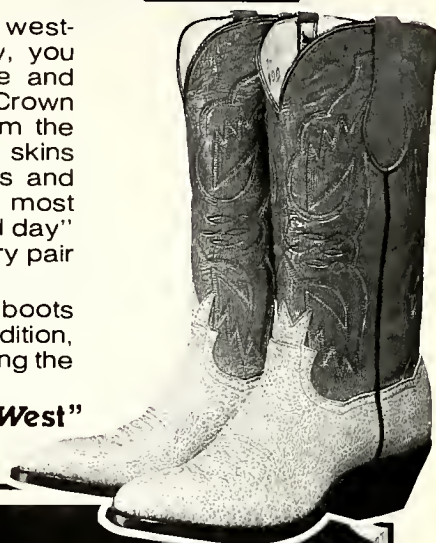
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FFA in Action

(Pick up ACTION from Page 35)

Elk Survival Service

Severe winter weather conditions prompted the Fish and Game Department to ask the public for help in feeding the starving deer and elk in the West.

The Moffat County FFA Chapter in Craig, Colorado, was one of the many organizations who volunteered their time and manpower. In cooperation with the high school Key Club, duties of feeding the elk were shared.

The herd assigned to us consisted of 106 head including two mature bull elk. Every morning at 7:00 a.m. the hay was loaded at the Division of Wildlife warehouse. The elk were fed 19 bales per day.

Moffat County FFA and Key Club traded back and forth the responsibility of scheduling members every two weeks.



Taking their turn at hauling hay to the elk were members Lonnie Steeter, left, and Mike Hoke, right.

The combined effort of the Moffat County students saved animals that might have otherwise succumbed to the severe weather conditions. (Mike Hoke, BOAC chairman) ...

Dumpsters Forever

Are you down in the dumps...or should I say dumpsters? The Plainville, Kansas, FFA Chapter sure has been this year.

In keeping with their tradition of developing pride in their small town in northwest Kansas they launched a community beautification project which focused primarily on the dilapidated city trash receptacles.

Chapter leaders decided to start by contacting members of the city council to secure appropriate suggestions. After meeting with council members on a one-to-one basis, chapter Advisor Wayne DeWerff reported to the students the council's consensus of a need to repair the vandalized, weather deteriorated and generally unsightly dumpsters.

Although the chapter agreed the project was worthwhile, and they would like to undertake it, the financial costs were an obstacle. A lot of money could be poured into a project of this nature, especially to refurbish 32 dumpsters. Undaunted, chapter representatives contacted and met with the Chamber of

Commerce members urging them to allocate the needed funding for the repairs and painting. The city council responded favorably and granted the chapter the money.

From class to class the overhauling fever spread and soon many chapter members found themselves caught up in the repair. Even though the freshmen had not yet learned shop procedures which would allow them to weld or cut metal, they found themselves buffing rusted metal and flaked paint.

The most tedious part of any project is adding the final detail, but by the same token nothing can highlight a project more than that extra special touch. Realizing this, members took special care stenciling and then painting letters on the side of the dumpster to create slogans promoting the vocational agriculture/FFA program. A few of the slogans used thus far are: Vo-Ag/FFA—Go For It!; Vo-Ag/FFA Fever, Catch It!; and Go For The Action—Vo-Ag/FFA—No Parking was a must. Then the FFA emblem decal ordered from the Supply Service added the final touch.

Since January, nine dumpsters have been completed. The remainder needing repair will be completed in the fall of 1984. (Dawn Russell, Amy Ochampaugh and Advisor Wayne DeWerff) ...

Progressive Chapter

The members of the Kingwood, Texas, Chapter geared up for two special FFA Week activities.

One activity was our Progress Show. It is a community affair that consists of the showing and judging of livestock, parent and school administration show-

(Continued on Page 40)



"That's NOT what I meant by getting your teeth into something worthwhile."

FFA SUPPLY SERVICE ENTERS THE COMPUTER AGE!!



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manship classes, cake auction and a chili cookoff. It is a very exciting event in the community and it helps spread enthusiasm for the FFA.

The chapter also hosts the agribusiness breakfast each year after National FFA Week. The business people of the community are treated to a breakfast of eggs, sausage and biscuits. Then, the chapter presents the Greenhand members their jackets and performs the induction ceremony and officially welcomes the Greenhands into the chapter. (Greg Bush, President) ...

Alumni Were Big Money

The Huntley, Illinois, FFA Chapter has a slave sale each year to raise money for chapter activities. Last October, an FFA alumni member was critically injured in an accident. Since then, he has remained in a coma. Chapter President James Marsh suggested this year's sale benefit this former member Bill Martin. Since Bill was a close friend of many current members, the chapter overwhelmingly approved the suggestion and the sale took place March 29, 1984.

It was decided that 50 percent of the proceeds raised by the sale of current

members would go to Bill Martin. The other 50 percent would go to the FFA fund. All of the money raised by the sale of donated products from area businesses would also go to the Martin fund. This year, for the first time, cash donations were accepted and FFA alumni were auctioned off. The sale of alumni alone brought in over half of the profits. In all, the 25 members auctioned off averaged \$91 each with the FFA alumni averaging \$93 each, both records.

The community turned out in large numbers, filling the gymnasium bleachers to capacity. Gordon Stade, a popular local auctioneer, auctioned off the members, donations and alumni in three hours on that chilly March night.

After the final bill was paid, the chapter presented Bill's parents with a check for \$5,340. The remaining monies went to the FFA fund. (Jeff Peterson, Reporter) ...

Chain Reaction

The Lackawanna Trail FFA Chapter in Factoryville, Pennsylvania, is continuing their calf chain they started in 1982.

Rich Croasdale, a junior, received a registered Holstein heifer as a freshman. The heifer has recently freshened and Sean Perry will get the heifer calf.

The rules of the calf chain require the member receiving the calf to provide excellent care for the calf and to show the calf at the local fair each summer. The member receiving the calf is also required to keep records on the calf in a vocational agriculture record book. (Doug Croasdale, Reporter) ...

Helping the Handicapped Helped Us

An annual handicapped student ag skill day is a unique and rewarding experience for the FFA members in the Armijo Chapter in Fairfield, California.

We had livestock on hand for them to see and pet. We made picture frames for our guests and took pictures of each visiting student with one of the calves which meant each guest had a lasting memento of their day "on the farm."

The handicapped students were introduced to butter making and ice cream making. The ice cream was eaten as a treat that day. The butter was sampled on crackers and each student took the butter he/she made home to share with their families.

In addition to all of this, the FFA's included basic instruction on flower arranging. A small arrangement using chrysanthemums was completed by each handicapped student. Several of them said they wanted to give this to their moms. (Scott Hansford, Reporter) ...

Say Your Piece

FFA members are invited to write a "Salute to Agriculture" in 100 words or less about the role farmers and/or ranchers play in improving the economy and standard of living in North America. The message should emphasize the positive job the farmer is doing.

Winners will receive cash prizes and commemorative buckles of the National Finals Rodeo from Hesston Corporation. Entry forms for the contest are available from state and national FFA offices, Hesston farm equipment dealers and from Hesston Corporation, Hesston, Kansas 67062. Entries must be postmarked September 30, 1984.

Last year's winning "Salute" by Kevin Ochsner, Fort Collins, Colorado, was aired as a public service message during the National Finals Rodeo telecast last December.

The 100 finalists will be awarded a 1984 Hesston NFR commemorative belt buckle designed by western artist Fred Fellows. The first place winner will receive \$500 in cash. Two second place winners will be awarded \$250 each, and \$100 will be presented to five third place winners. All winners will be announced at the National FFA Convention. ...

ACTION LINES

- Clean up around the ag shop entrance. ▼
- Don't forget to keep your SOEP records. ▼
- Have you ever considered an FFA international exchange trip for yourself? ▼
- Have dinner with the members of another chapter during state convention. Swap ideas. ▼
- Encourage your new advisor to accompany the FFA officer you send to the Washington Leadership Conference this summer. ▼
- Organize a small vegetable and produce market in the mall or town square. Especially help senior citizen gardeners sell extra produce. ▼
- Does the FFA sign on the edge of town need painting? ▼
- Invite your parents to join the FFA Alumni. ▼
- Use your camera and make photos for the chapter scrapbook. ▼
- Use a video camera to practice oral reasons. ▼
- Build a new bookcase for the library. ▼
- Talk to the oldest blacksmith in your area. ▼
- Organize an area in the vo-ag department to get career/college information—a career corner. ▼

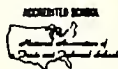


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School Visitor "Hogs" the Spotlight

Members of the ROVA Chapter in Oneida, Illinois, had an unusual participant in their high school vo-ag classes in February and March. A pig went to school instead of to market.

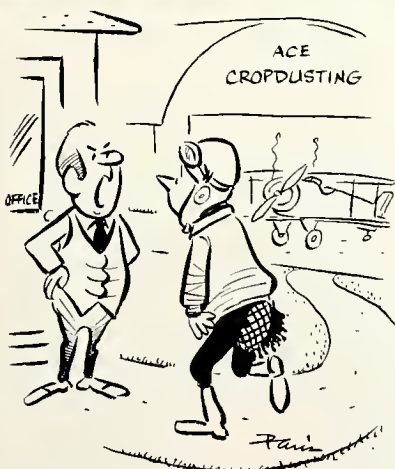
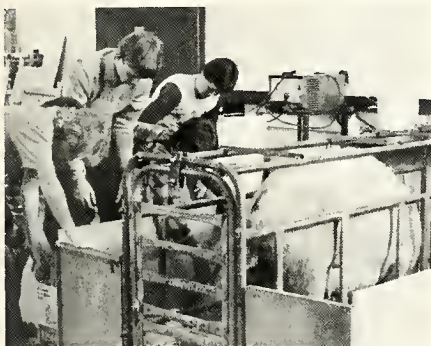
An area farmer donated a sow which farrowed 13 pigs in a crate in the ag shop.

Students were responsible for daily chores—feeding the sow and hauling manure to the ag experience plot. During classtime, they notched ears, clipped tails, needle teeth and navel cords, and castrated and vaccinated the baby pigs. They also kept labor and feed records. The crate had been welded by ag mechanics members.

After several weeks at school, the sow was returned to its owners. The pigs were kept a short while longer and then sold as feeder pigs. The money earned will be spent for other ag-related projects at the school.

The pig-in-the-school project will be repeated next year to give students hands-on experience in swine management. (Dianne Beetler) ●●●

Since the sow and litter were nearby the classroom, students could get first-hand experience as they studied management practices.



"Sampson, aren't you flying a little low?"

FACTS FOR ACTION

Could Someone In Your Family Save You?

There can be dangerous consequences when family members do not know much about machinery on the farm, says Ordie Hogsett, University of Illinois Extension safety specialist. He asks "What if a farmer was caught in machinery and family members didn't even know the basics such as turning off the power?"

For safety's sake, Hogsett says the major operator of equipment on a farm should point out and demonstrate the following operations to all family members. If some of these skills on the check-list apply to more than one piece of equipment, family members should practice on each type of machinery.

- where and how to turn off the ignition on gas-powered equipment
- how to operate the fuel shut-off on diesel equipment
- how to adjust the tractor seat
- how to drive forward
- how to drive in reverse
- where and how to turn off lights (to prevent fire)
- location of fire extinguishers
- how to operate a fire extinguisher
- how to disengage the power takeoff (PTO)
- location of power lines in relation to movement of equipment
- how to turn off augers and elevators
- how to disconnect electric power
- how to raise and lower a loader and bucket
- operation of remote hydraulic ram control levers
- how to raise the combine head
- use of the safety bar for raised combine head
- how to turn on fan to get air movement in manure pits
- location of water tanks in case of an anhydrous ammonia accident
- how to turn on the grain bin's aeration fan
- how to turn off the grain bin drier
- how to turn off the automatic grain cycling equipment
- how to contact rescue or emergency personnel (are numbers handy?)
- how to get emergency vehicles into various parts of the farmstead.

Some of these skills could save a life during this coming harvest.

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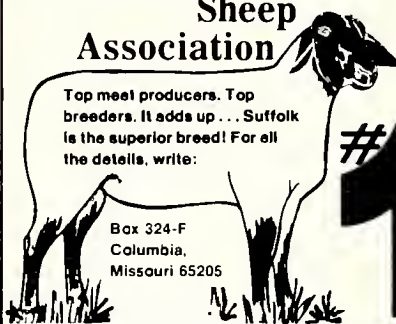


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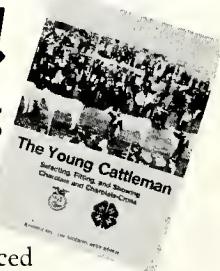
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The Joke Page

A certain man called Jones was on top of the roof during a flooding and the water was rising fast until it almost covered his feet. A man in a canoe offered him some help. Jones said, "No thank you, I have faith in God and He will save me." After the water rose to his waist, a motorboat came and offered him help. Jones said, "No thank you, I have faith in God and He will save me." When the water was almost to his head, a helicopter came by and offered him help. Jones said, "No thank you, I have faith in God and He will save me."

Two hours later after resisting no more, he drowned. When he was about to enter the heavenly gates, he asked why God didn't save him. God said, "What more do you want? I sent two boats and a helicopter."

Jose Salinas
Roma, Texas



"Always remember, son, on this farm he may be arbitrary, bullheaded, and even misinformed, but he's never wrong!"

Q: Where does the president keep his armies?

A: In his sleeveies.

Jeff Angell
Demossville, Kentucky

One day there were two flies sitting on the handle of a lawn mower in the sun. In the meantime, a boy brought a roll of bologna and dropped it on the doorstep. These two flies saw the bologna and flew down to feast on it. They ate and ate. Then they flew back to sit on the mower handle. After a while they started to fly back to the bologna but fell to the ground killing themselves.

Moral of this story is: Never fly off the handle when you're full of bologna.

Glenda Chaney
Somerset, Kentucky

Two neighbors were chatting and the first woman asked her friend, "What do you think of Red China?"

The other replied, "It's not too bad on a white tablecloth."

Bobbie Mae Cooley
Bowen, Illinois

The sports car driver was giving a friend his first ride in one of those low-slung models. The friend appeared to be puzzled, so the driver asked him what was wrong. "I can't figure out what that long wall is that we've been passing." "That's no wall," snapped the driver, "that's the curb!"

Gale Wilson
Elgin, Oregon

Q: Why do Greenhands always go to movies in groups of 18 or more?

A: Because under 17 not admitted.

Jim Mleziva
Denmark, Wisconsin

A little boy came home from school leading a goat. He told his mother he'd gotten it in a trade. The shaken mother asked, "Where will you keep it?"

When the lad said he'd keep the animal in his room, the mother cried, "But what about the smell?"

"Oh," replied the boy, "the goat will just have to get used to that."

Joy Salts
Rolla, Missouri

The old hillbilly was driving down the road too fast and a highway patrolman stopped him. The highway patrolman asked, "Do you have any ID?" The hillbilly replied, "Any idy about what?"

Tim Haner
Visalia, California

The hesitant driver, waiting for traffic to clear, came to a complete stop on a freeway ramp. The traffic thinned, but the intimidated driver still waited. Finally, an infuriated voice yelled from behind, "The sign says to yield, not give up."

Donnie Aldeidege
Addison, Alabama

"You're a cheat!" shouted the defense lawyer at his opponent. "You're a liar!" charged the other lawyer.

The judge banged his gavel. "Let's proceed with the case, he said dryly, "now that the attorneys have been properly identified."

Doug Dew
Mayfield, Kentucky

A farmer decided to teach his wife to drive the truck one day and when she got behind the wheel she asked "What do I do if the brakes fail?"

The farmer, with a quick reply, answered, "Hit something cheap!"

James Smith
Conway, Arkansas

Charlie, the Greenhand



"I know the pet show isn't until next week, but it will take us that long to get there . . .!"

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